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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Are you in favor of Japanese lawmakers' plan to relocate U.S. troops from Futenma, Japan to the CNMI?

Let your voice be heard!
Go to
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INSIDE

Face To Face

Toyota president Akio Toyoda said Thursday he will testify at a congressional hearing next week about the automaker's massive recalls in the United States, meeting face to face with lawmakers after enduring criticism that he responded too slowly to the company's safety crisis.

Business...Page 9

Suicide Plane

A software engineer furious with the Internal Revenue Service launched a suicide attack on the agency Thursday by crashing his small plane into an office building containing nearly 200 IRS employees, setting off a raging fire that sent workers running for their lives.

Nation...Page 10

Militant Arrested

Philippine troops arrested a suspected Muslim militant accused in the high-profile kidnappings of three Americans, two of whom were later killed, and dozens of Filipinos nine years ago, the military reported Friday.

Maharlika...Page 12

Boost in Korean arrivals not enough to make up decline in Japanese tourists

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

While tourists arrivals from its No. 1 market Japan continued to nosedive, Marianas Visitors Authority's No. 2 market Korea gave the CNMI's embattled visitors industry a much needed shot in the arm with better-then-expected growth in January 2010.

Based on the latest data from MVA, Japan showed a significant decline of 19 percent in the overall arrivals for January with total of 18,018 visitors compared to the 22,302 recorded during the same period last year.

MVA said while the CNMI still has the same number of flights operating in January, smaller aircraft has resulted in

See BOOST on Page 4

Lawmaker wants CURFEW LAWS ENFORCED

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Taimanao

Sen. Jovita M. Taimanao (Ind-Rota) has asked Public Safety Commissioner Santiago F. Tudela to ensure that curfew laws in the CNMI are "vigorously enforced," saying that lawmakers are limited to enacting these laws but not executing them.

See CURFEW on Page 4

'Plugging revenue leaks, raising fines to help cut deficit'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

House Ways and Means Committee chairman Rep. Ramon S. Basa (Cov-Saipan) said yesterday that besides passing his austerity measures bill, the government can reduce deficit and generate more revenue by enforcing existing laws and raising the penalties for law violations.

» Over $231,000 in govt overtime costs per pay period

Meanwhile, besides medical referral and utilities costs which were among the key factors in the $13 million overspending in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2010 alone, the government also has to address personnel costs including overtime pay.

In the pay period ending Jan. 2,

See REVENUE on Page 4

READING WITH THE STARS

Police Officer 2 Jason Tarkong, right, reads a book by Eric Carle, "Rooster's Off to See the World," to second graders under the class of Roxie Lamar at Oleai Elementary School yesterday morning as part of the school's Reading with the Stars program. The program invites community leaders and professionals including politicians and other government officials, businessmen, and athletes, to read to students. HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Two other lawsuits over plane crash, consolidated, set for trial. PAGE 2
Hearing scheduled for Kilili's visitor center bill. PAGE 3

Local

Two other lawsuits over plane crash, consolidated, set for trial

The federal court has consolidated two other lawsuits filed by two other survivors in the 2006 plane crash on Saipan and was set for jury trial.

According to records in the U.S. District Court for the NMI, Chief Judge Alex R. Munson closed the file in Patrick James Timmerman's lawsuit and consolidated it with the case of Yoko Kamiyama.

Munson set the jury trial for June 14, 2010 at 9am.

The pre-trial conference will be on June 4, 2010.

Kamiyama and Timmerman were among the seven passengers on a Piper Cherokee aircraft that were injured when the plane crashed on a farm in Upper Dandan while enroute to Tinian on Aug. 11, 2006.

The airplane crashed into a farm, bursting into flames and destroying the plane. Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino reportedly leased the plane at the time.

ALL SMILES
Students and staff of the Northern Marianas College's Educational Talent Search Program pose for a photo during the program's Open House held last Thursday. ETS is a federally funded program that offers tutoring and guidance services to middle and high schools and prepares them for success throughout high school into college.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The plaintiffs were among the seven passengers.

Kamiyama suffered serious injuries, including burns on her arms and legs, fractured and broken bones, various contusions and other injuries.

Timmerman sustained severe and permanent injuries. Kamiyama sued for negligence and other claims pilot Brent J. Hinkemeyer, Taga Air Charter Services Inc., Tinian Dynasty Hotel Inc., and Hong Kong Entertainment (Overseas) Investment Ltd. She demanded over $100,000 in damages, court costs, and attorney's fees.

Timmerman also filed a lawsuit in federal court against the same defendants. His wife, Maria Purley Agcaoili Timmerman, and their minor son, also joined the lawsuit as co-plaintiffs. They demanded payment of damages.

Timmerman, also a licensed pilot then employed by Tinian Dynasty, was seated next to pilot Hinkemeyer.

On Thursday, Munson dismissed the lawsuits against the same defendants filed by two other passengers—Tomoyuki Nagata and Dr. Jun Takimoto. The judge ordered the dismissal after Tinian Dynasty settled the lawsuits. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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Tinian Chamber wants Tinian port included in JGPO 'plan B'

The Tinian Chamber of Commerce wants the island's dilapidated port to be included in JGPO's "plan B" for funding of Guam's port improvements.

In an e-mail sent to JGPO Executive Director David Bice, the Chamber requested the inclusion of the port in the proposal. The move came after the Department of Transportation denied the $50-million dollar ARRA Tiger Grant Application for Guam's port modernization plan.

"The Tinian Chamber of Commerce would like to officially request your assistance to include Tinian's port improvements as a part of your "plan B" for funding of Guam's Port Improvements. The Tinian Chamber of Commerce as well as the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, strongly believes that Tinian's port is in dire need of repair especially due to the planned increased usage by the military for its proposed actions. ***(see DEIS comments by both Chambers)*** Both the Tinian and Saipan Chambers of Commerce can be available to discuss this proposal with you in detail and we offer our full support and resources to ensure you have all the information necessary for Tinian's port to be included in your "plan B" scenario. We look forward to your positive acceptance of our suggestion," Tinian Chamber of Commerce president Phillip Mendiola-Long said in an e-mail to Bice.

The grant denial was a huge surprise to the Port Authority of Guam as well as the Joint Guam Program Office; and the message has left the agencies charged with the first phase of the Guam build-up reeling for other funding sources to improve Guam's port infrastructure.

The modernization of Guam's port has been described as "critical" by the military for the successful implementation of the Guam build-up and therefore a "plan B" has been in development for the remote possibility of a denial of the Tiger Grant application.

Now that the remote possibility has occurred, JGPO's offices in Washigton, D.C. and in Guam are working overtime to fine tune their "plan B" option for funding of Guam's port modernization.

The Tinian Chamber is soliciting to be a part of JGPO's "plan b" as it had warned JGPO in its comments in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that Tinian's Harbor is not suitable for military usage as proposed by the recommended actions of the DEIS.

The Tinian Chamber of Commerce cautioned that the 65-year-old infrastructure at the Tinian port has already been declared a State of Emergency by the Governor of the CNMI and the Mayor of Tinian and is therefore unsuitable for military usage as proposed by the action.

"The breakwater has failed and is no longer useful and Tinian has lost two finger piers and the connecting dock due to structural failures and age. The only remaining usable berthing area is the main quay and now that is in risk of structural failure due to past typhoon damage. If the connecting dock collapses (which it is on the verge of doing), the main quay will be useless as debris will wash into the main quay area making it impossible for ships to berth," read the Engineers' Report tasked with evaluating the damage to Tinian's port.

"It would make sense to combine the port needs of both Tinian and Guam so that funding for later port developments on Tinian don't hamper build up and operational requirements there as it is happening on Guam now. We have a rare opportunity, to combine resources and efforts of both the CNMI and Guam to ensure that civilian infrastructure is properly funded by the federal government for the military's proposed DEIS actions. Therefore, we would like JGPO to work with the CNMI government and the Commonwealth Ports Authority to ensure that Tinian's Port is indeed a part of JGPO's 'plan B,'" said Mendiola-Long. ***(PR)***

Farmer's lawsuit vs Labor stagnant for almost 8 years

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge David Wiseman has refused to dismiss a farmer's lawsuit against the Department of Labor that has been stagnant for almost eight years in court.

Wiseman said petitioner Shamsul Hoque's complaint should not be dismissed for failing to prosecute since he has provided the court with a justifiable reason for the delay.

"The court believes that petitioner is diligently pursuing his appeal now and thus is entitled to his day in court," said Wiseman in his written ruling issued on Wednesday.

The judge said even if petitioner's delay was lengthy in time, Labor's failure to take any action would establish that Labor may also have been less than diligent in pursuing this case.

Wiseman

Wiseman denied Labor's motion to dismiss Hoque's petition for judicial review of Labor's orders. He, however, denied the farmer's motion to reverse Labor's orders and remand the case to Labor.

According to court records, Hoque worked for his employer as a farmer. His employer soon realized that he lacked sufficient farming skills to work independently.

After receiving his first paycheck, Hoque abandoned his employer.

Labor opened a compliance agency case. Hoque failed to cooperate with Labor's investigation.

Ultimately, a Labor Administrative Hearing Officer revoked Hoque's work permit. The farmer appealed and the Labor Secretary affirmed the hearing officer's decision.

On Dec. 6, 2000, Hoque initiated a petition asking the court to review Labor's orders.

Subsequently, the case stood stagnant from Sept. 25, 2001 until July 23, 2009.

Hoque claimed that the reason for the delay was due to the fact that on Sept. 25, 2001, through his counsel Joseph E. Horey, he stipulated with Labor that all deadlines be vacated in the case until such time as the transcript could be prepared and reviewed.

The court approved this stipulation, however, neither party ever requested a scheduling conference to set a new schedule nor was the requested transcript ever prepared.

On July 23, 2009, Horey filed a request for scheduling order. Labor then filed a motion to dismiss for failure to prosecute, claiming that petitioner failed to prosecute the case.

Hoque then filed a motion to reverse and remand. He claimed that the Labor Secretary's order on appeal was deficient on its face.

Petitioner supported this argument by citing a statute stating that the secretary has a mandatory duty, when issuing a decision, to state his conclusions on the issues presented, and the reasons or basis for those conclusions.

Labor, through assistant attorney general Eli Golob, opposed the motion. Golob argued that petitioner's motion was procedurally improper.

Golob asserted that "if an administrative agency's appellate authority specifically adopts an underlying administrative opinion, it need not set forth an independent statement of legal and factual findings."

In his order, Wiseman said since no transcript was ever furnished to Hoque and no new schedule conference was ever agreed on by the parties nor set by the court this matter remained in status quo until July 22, 2009.

Wiseman said Hoque has not ignored any of the new deadlines, has appeared at all of the status conferences, and has continued to prosecute the case.

"The court does not believe that the delay in this matter is unreasonable in view of the said circumstances," the judge pointed out.

Here, Wiseman noted, this is not the case since Labor was responsible for taking positive action with respect to the transcripts agreed on by the parties, but failed to do so.

In addition, the judge said, Labor made no request to schedule a conference or dismiss the case until after the court entered its order setting a status conference.

Wiseman said he recognizes the harsh realities of dismissing cases without determining the merits and prefers not to dispose of cases before litigants have their day in court.

On the motion to reverse and remand, Wiseman said the court has the power to reverse and remand a case to the Labor Secretary pursuant to a statute.

"This court must examine the record to determine whether the result reached by the Secretary is reasonable in light of the available facts and applicable law," he said.

The Labor secretary, Wiseman said, need not provide an independent statement of fact and law if it simply adopts an administrative law judge's opinion based on the record pursuant to the statute.

On Labor seretary's mandatory duty issue, Wiseman said the secretary was not bound to state his conclusions and findings of law since he did not hear the matter anew.

The judge said the secretary did not have to state his own findings and conclusions, since it is clear from the record that he adopted the hearing officer's decision in its entirety.

Autism Society meeting today

The Autism Society of the CNMI will hold its monthly meeting today, Feb. 20, 10am at the NMPASI Conference Room.

Information regarding the group and future meetings will be available at this meeting. All families and friends of individuals with autism and autism related spectrum disorders are invited to attend. For additional information, call John at 234-8803/4 or Larrisa at 322-3761 or send an email to as_cnmi@yahoo.com. ***(PR)***

Saipan Southern PTA meeting Wednesday

Saipan Southern High School will hold its Parents, Teachers Association meeting this Wednesday, Feb. 24, 6pm in the Manta café.

The association is asking parents of SSHS students to attend as important information will be addressed during the meeting. ***(PR)***

Hearing scheduled for Kilili's visitor center bill

The House Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans and Wildlife announced today a hearing on H.R. 3511, the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument Management Enhancement Act of 2009.

The bill provides for Monument visitor facilities to be located in the Northern Mariana Islands and was introduced by Congressman Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan in July. A similar bill, H.R. 4493, introduced by Subcommittee Chair Madeleine Z. Bordallo this year is also on the agenda. The hearing will be on Thursday, Feb. 25, 10am, EST.

Sablan

"I want to thank Chairwoman Madeleine Z. Bordallo for making time on her Subcommittee's very busy agenda for these two bills," said Sablan. "I appreciate her positive response to my requests for a hearing."

"The many people in the Northern Mariana Islands who supported establishment of the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument are very eager to see the promise of this Monument begin to be fulfilled. Establishing the visitor center in the NMI is an important first step towards realizing the potential benefits of the Monument."

Sablan introduced H.R. 3511 on July 31, 2009. The bill has 37 co-sponsors. His bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to build a multipurpose visitor center in the NMI for interpretation, public education and enjoyment of the Monument. A hearing on the legislation was first scheduled in October, then cancelled by the Subcommittee.

Chairwoman Bordallo introduced H.R. 4493 on January 25, 2010. Bordallo's bill provides for Monument visitor and research services to be placed on Guam. Bordallo's bill also gives the government of Guam a role in the management of the Monument, equivalent to the management role of the CNMI provided in the Presidential Proclamation that created the Monument.

The 95,216 square mile Marianas Trench Marine National Monument is composed of three units. The Trench unit includes the seabed in which the Marianas Trench is located. The Volcanic Unit includes numerous undersea volcanoes and thermal vents. Neither of these units incorporates the waters above the ocean floor.

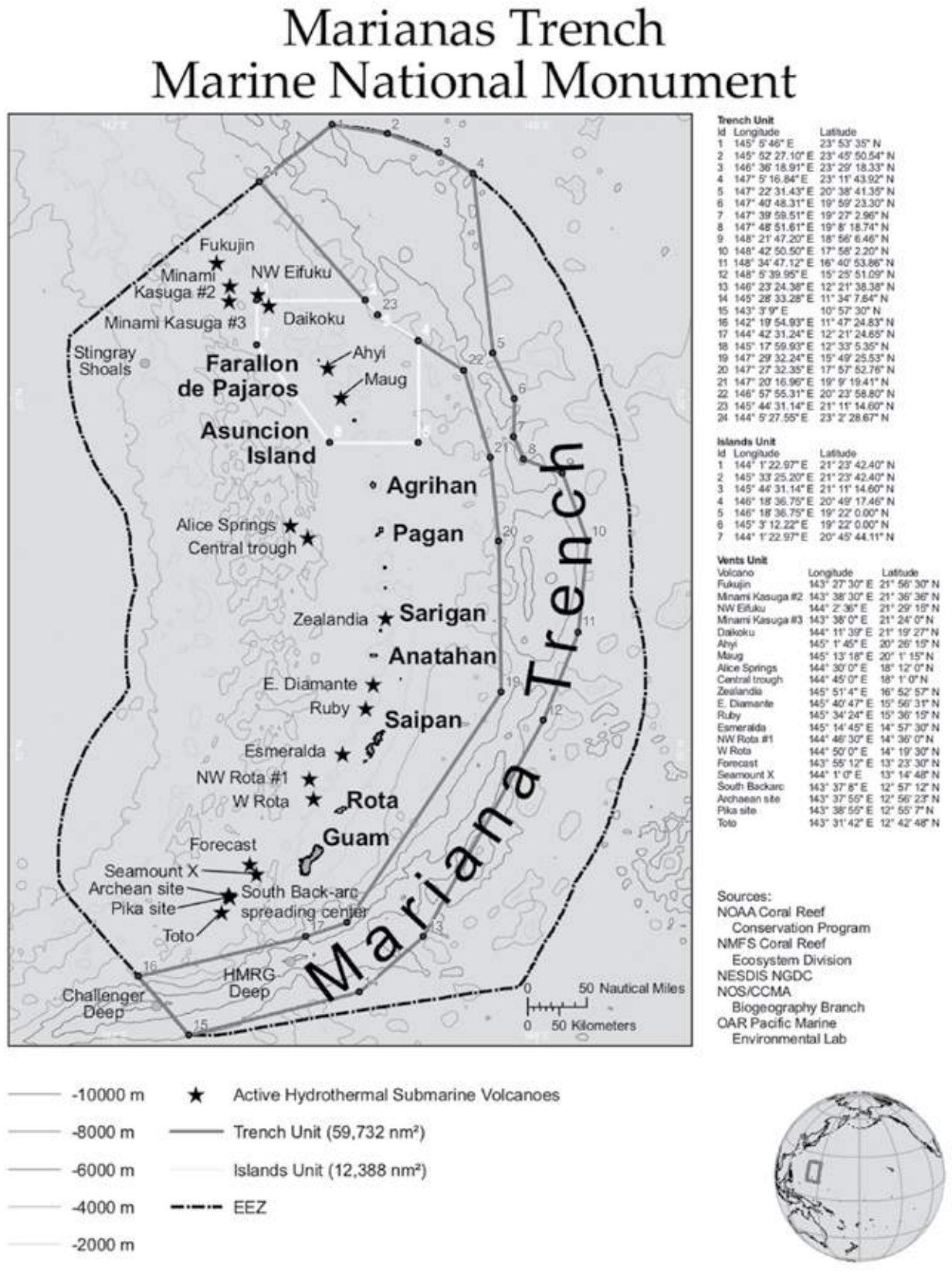
The Islands Unit encloses the CNMI islands of Farallon de Pajaros, Maug Islands, and Asuncion. The Islands Unit includes both the seabed and the ocean waters above. Only the three islands themselves, which belong to the Commonwealth, are not part of the Islands Unit of the Monument.

"I look forward to working with Chairwoman Bordallo to make sure that Congress does the right thing with respect to development and management of the Monument," said Sablan.

"And I look forward to taking testimony from Governor Fitial, the Northern Marianas Legislature, Friends of the Monument, and other parties both in the Northern Marianas and nationally, who advocated for the Monument or helped negotiate with the White House the terms and conditions of the Presidential Proclamation, signed on Jan. 6, 2009."

The Subcommittee will webcast the hearing live from the House Natural Resources Committee website: *http://resourcescommittee.house.gov/*.

Anyone interested can also watch the webcast live at the Saipan District office on Feb. 26, beginning at 1am, Chamorro Standard Time. Please refer questions about the event to Congressman Sablan's Saipan district office at (670)-323-2647/8. ***(PR)***


Marianas Trench
Marine National Monument
Fukujin
Minami Kasuga #2
NW Eifuku
Minami Kasuga #3
Daikoku
Stingray Shoals
Farallon de Pajaros
Ahyi
Maug
Asuncion Island
Agrihan
Alice Springs
Central trough
Pagan
Zealandia
Sarigan
Anatahan
E. Diamante
Ruby
Saipan
Esmeralda
NW Rota #1
W Rota
Rota
Guam
Forecast
Seamount X
Archean site
Pika site
South Back-arc spreading center
Toto
HMRG Deep
Challenger Deep
Mariana Trench
0 50 Nautical Miles
0 50 Kilometers
-10000 m
-8000 m
-6000 m
-4000 m
-2000 m
Active Hydrothermal Submarine Volcanoes
Trench Unit (59,732 nm²)
Islands Unit (12,388 nm²)
EEZ
Trench Unit
Id Longitude Latitude
1 145° 5' 46" E 23° 53' 35" N
2 145° 52' 27.10" E 23° 45' 50.54" N
3 146° 36' 18.91" E 23° 29' 18.33" N
4 147° 5' 16.84" E 23° 11' 43.92" N
5 147° 22' 31.43" E 20° 38' 41.35" N
6 147° 40' 48.31" E 19° 59' 23.30" N
7 147° 39' 59.51" E 19° 27' 2.96" N
8 147° 48' 51.61" E 19° 8' 18.74" N
9 148° 21' 47.20" E 18° 56' 6.46" N
10 148° 42' 50.50" E 17° 58' 2.20" N
11 148° 34' 47.12" E 16° 40' 53.86" N
12 148° 5' 39.95" E 15° 25' 51.09" N
13 146° 23' 24.38" E 12° 21' 38.38" N
14 145° 28' 33.28" E 11° 34' 7.64" N
15 143° 3' 9" E 10° 57' 30" N
16 142° 19' 54.93" E 11° 47' 24.83" N
17 144° 42' 31.24" E 12° 21' 24.65" N
18 145° 17' 59.93" E 12° 33' 5.35" N
19 147° 29' 32.24" E 15° 49' 25.53" N
20 147° 27' 32.35" E 17° 57' 52.76" N
21 147° 20' 16.96" E 19° 9' 19.41" N
22 146° 57' 55.31" E 20° 23' 58.80" N
23 145° 44' 31.14" E 21° 11' 14.60" N
24 144° 5' 27.55" E 23° 2' 28.67" N
Islands Unit
Id Longitude Latitude
1 144° 1' 22.97" E 21° 23' 42.40" N
2 145° 33' 25.20" E 21° 23' 42.40" N
3 145° 44' 31.14" E 21° 11' 14.60" N
4 146° 18' 36.75" E 20° 49' 17.46" N
5 146° 18' 36.75" E 19° 22' 0.00" N
6 145° 3' 12.22" E 19° 22' 0.00" N
7 144° 1' 22.97" E 20° 45' 44.11" N
Vents Unit
Volcano Longitude Latitude
Fukujin 143° 27' 30" E 21° 56' 30" N
Minami Kasuga #2 143° 38' 30" E 21° 36' 36" N
NW Eifuku 144° 2' 36" E 21° 29' 15" N
Minami Kasuga #3 143° 38' 0" E 21° 24' 0" N
Daikoku 144° 11' 39" E 21° 19' 27" N
Ahyi 145° 1' 45" E 20° 26' 15" N
Maug 145° 13' 18" E 20° 1' 15" N
Alice Springs 144° 30' 0" E 18° 12' 0" N
Central trough 144° 45' 0" E 18° 1' 0" N
Zealandia 145° 51' 4" E 16° 52' 57" N
E. Diamante 145° 40' 47" E 15° 56' 31" N
Ruby 145° 34' 24" E 15° 36' 15" N
Esmeralda 145° 14' 45" E 14° 57' 30" N
NW Rota #1 144° 46' 30" E 14° 36' 0" N
W Rota 144° 50' 0" E 14° 19' 30" N
Forecast 143° 55' 12" E 13° 23' 30" N
Seamount X 144° 1' 0" E 13° 14' 48" N
South Backarc 143° 37' 8" E 12° 57' 12" N
Archaean site 143° 37' 55" E 12° 56' 23" N
Pika site 143° 38' 55" E 12° 55' 7" N
Toto 143° 31' 42" E 12° 42' 48" N
Sources:
NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program
NMFS Coral Reef Ecosystem Division
NESDIS NGDC
NOS/CCMA Biogeography Branch
OAR Pacific Marine Environmental Lab

Nursing students now eligible for SHEFA

2 other local bills now law

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Nursing and medical students in the CNMI are now eligible to apply for and be granted Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance, about a year after another local law was signed authorizing SHEFA scholarship for those enrolled at the Northern Marianas Trades Institute and those who have no high school degree or the equivalent but who are working toward a degree.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial signed House Local Bill 16-36 on Feb. 12, making SHEFA scholarship available to students enrolled in post-secondary vocational or training programs pursuing a degree or certification in nursing or any other related medical programs in the CNMI.

H.L.B. 16-36, introduced by former Rep. Oscar M. Babauta (Cov-Saipan) who is now acting Public Lands secretary, is now Saipan Local Law 16-11. Former Rep. Justo Quitugua (D-Saipan) co-sponsored the bill.

Those that may benefit from the new local law are schools other than Northern Marianas College that now offer nursing and other medical-related courses in the CNMI, including Emmanuel College, University of Loyola at CNMI, International Business and Professional College, Eucon International School of Saipan, and American Mediscience University.

Fitial also signed into local law H.L.B. 16-40 which makes a SHEFA board members appointee automatically confirmed if the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation fails to confirm or reject that appointee within 30 days after the delegation receives notice of the appointment.

H.L.B. 16-40, introduced by former Rep, Francisco S. Dela Cruz, is now Saipan Local Law 16-12.

The governor also signed H.L.B. 16-37 into local law, naming the fire station in Koblerville the "Jose Terlaje Ada Building" in recognition and appreciation of Ada's untiring and outstanding contributions to the Department of Public Safety and to the people of the CNMI.

Former Reps. David Apatang, Oscar M. Babauta and Justo Quitugua, along with re-elected Rep. Raymond Palacios (Cov-Saipan), introduced H.L.B. 16-37.

The local bill is now Saipan Local Law 16-13.

Munson rules 5 defendants in human smuggling not entitled to jury trial

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson yesterday ruled that the five defendants in the reported human smuggling case are not entitled to jury trial.

Munson ordered that the jury trials orally set at arraignment last Feb. 9 are hereby vacated in the cases against Shixu Huang, Lihua Yi, Shizu Huang, Pingping Zhang, and Zhanshan Zhan.

Munson said the bench trials of the defendants shall commence April 22, 2010 at 9am.

It was federal court designated judge David Wiseman who conducted the arraignment and set the date of jury trials.

Wiseman temporarily freed the five defendants on $2,500 unsecured bond.

The judge, however, imposed conditions such as not leaving Saipan and not changing address without court's permission.

Wiseman also ordered the defendants to stay away from boats and stay at least 200 feet away from the ocean or any part of the ocean.

The five defendants, all Chinese nationals, were arrested by federal agents on Rota last Jan. 30 for allegedly attempting to unlawfully enter Guam by boarding two inflatable boats. The defendants pleaded not guilty.

Reward offered for puppies' whereabouts

Pet Assistance and Welfare Services is seeking the public's assistance in locating two puppies that were stolen from a family in Capitol Hill.

Puti and Peaches are both boonie puppies and about 7-8 weeks old. One is golden in color weighs about 5 lbs. The other puppy is brown and golden markings, black streaks, and weighs about 6.2 lbs.

The family is offering a reward to anyone who has information that leads to the safe return of the animals.

PAWS is reminding the public that the organization is not responsible for the reward, and that any reward offered is solely the responsibility of the family.

If you have information about these puppies, contact 233-2045 or 789-0471. ***(PR)***

CURFEW

From Page 1

Taimanao, who chairs the Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee, said youth vandalism often happen at night and causes damage to property, financial loss, and negative impact on the tourism industry.

"By eliminating the opportunities for youths to learn from and then imitate adult criminals engaging in vandalism, we can reduce repair costs to the government and the private sector and welcome tourists to a safe and clean vacation environment," Taimanao told Tudela in a Feb. 5 letter.

Saipan, Rota, and Tinian have their respective local laws imposing curfew hours for minors.

The curfew laws intend to keep minors at home during the nighttime hours unless they have a legitimate reason to be out.

"Sadly, vandalism persists, leaving both physical damage and damage to our reputation as a beautiful and peaceful leisure destination," Taimanao said.

In February 2008, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial signed into law a bill imposing stiffer sanctions on violators of the youth curfew.

Under Public Law 15-129, there will be uniform penalties for violating the respective curfew laws on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Youth violators will face up to 30 days in prison and be ordered to conduct up to 250 hours of community service, instead of simply paying a fine.

Parents, guardians, and other adults who allow the youth to stay out during curfew hours may be fined $750, instead of $500.

On Saipan, curfew hours are from 10pm to 5am for minors aged 16 to 18 years, and 9pm to 5am for minors who are under 16 years old.

On Tinian, minors are not allowed outside from 8pm to 5am from Monday to Thursday, and from 11pm to 5am from Friday to Sunday and on holidays.

On Rota, curfew hours for minors are 9pm to 5am.

REVENUE

From Page 1

for example, the government spent $231,050.31 in overtime pay.

Of this amount, $75,141.76 was spent for Commonwealth Health Center personnel like doctors and nurses, while $155,908.55 was for all-other government employees, data from the Department of Finance showed.

Basa's committee, however, is still polishing his austerity measures bill to help reduce government deficit by shutting down non-critical government offices every other Friday and implementing unpaid legal holidays for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2010.

"We already have good laws; the problem is the lack of enforcement… It's pointless to keep on passing laws if enforcement is not there," Basa said in an interview at his office.

He cited as an example the need to strongly enforce anti-littering laws, among other things.

"I'd rather see violators assessed stiff fines rather than increase business license fees… The government can generate additional revenue if laws are properly enforced. These are revenues that the government deserves and are entitled to receive by law," said Basa.

Basa said he is also looking at raising the penalties assessed for those violating the law prohibiting the sale of alcohol after 10pm, or the law banning the sale of alcohol and cigarette products to minors.

"Some penalties are so lenient," he added.

'More enforcement officers needed'

Basa said his committee is also cognizant of the need to increase enforcement officers, including those for the Department of Commerce's Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco Control Division, the Department of Public Safety, and the Department of Finance.

He said former immigration officers, who already have the skills and knowledge, will be best candidates for additional enforcement officers in other government agencies. The federal government took over CNMI immigration on Nov. 28, 2009, displacing CNMI immigration officers, although many of them were transferred to other agencies.

Basa said the end goal of enforcing laws, raising violation penalties and reducing costs is to prevent further deficit which in FY 2009 stood at over $16.86 million, based on preliminary government data.

"If we only have a $150 million budget, we need to spend only $150 million," said Basa, but he said he is cognizant of the fact that there are expenses beyond control, including medical referrals.

The previous House budget bill identified budgetary resources of $162.820 million, which the Senate agreed on. But while the House bill pegs the appropriations at $150,288,886, the Senate amended it to $154,418,886 and included austerity measures like a 16-hour cut in government work hours per pay period to help reduce the projected deficit of $15.3 million in FY 2010.

The previous Senate and House were deadlocked on the FY 2010 budget. The government is thus operating under a continuing budget resolution since Oct. 1, 2009.

BOOST

From Page 1

fewer available seats.

Couple that with Delta Airlines' announced suspension of its regular flights from Nagoya from April 5 to June 9 and MVA is now looking at an additional cut in airline seats from Japan.

MVA reports that while the load factors between Nagoya and Saipan have been healthy—with projection of above 80 percent for the January-March period—the flight has been temporarily suspended for two months due to low forward bookings and Delta's need for the aircraft elsewhere.

MVA, meanwhile, reported that arrivals from Korea posted a 35-percent growth last month. January 2010 records showed that it registered 11,710 total visitor arrivals compared to January 2009's only 8,676 visitors. In December last year, the same market posted 25 percent hike in overall arrivals compared to the same period in December 2008.

The growth was attributed to the forecast continued recovery in arrivals from Korea for 2010 because of the stabilization of the nation's economy and the Korean won.

Saipan Tribune learned that arrivals from China were also down 31 percent to 3,065 Chinese visitors in January due to the Chinese New Year holiday falling in February this year versus in January last year. In January 2009, China market registered total arrivals of 4,447.

Russian arrivals were also less than half of what it posted last year at 487 visitors, or 57 percent reduction. The decrease was largely influenced by the large number of arrivals last January on two charter flights from Vladivostok.

Meanwhile, MVA said Guam arrivals were up 8 percent to 1,524 visitors, and arrivals from the United States were up 24 percent to 644 visitors.

Overall, January 2010 visitor arrivals to the CNMI dropped 9 percent compared to January 2009, with another month of mixed results from the islands' primary markets of Japan and Korea.

Records showed that arrivals to the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota registered 35,716 visitors last month compared to 38,932 in January 2009. So far this fiscal year, total visitors arrivals are 19 percent lower than the same period last fiscal year.

Hawaii may add gambling to its natural beauty

HONOLULU (AP)—Hawaii has always been known for its sun, sand and surf. It may soon add another attraction: slots.

Hawaii is one of the last two states with no legalized gambling, but lawmakers facing billion-dollar budget deficits and hunting for ways increase revenue are thinking about allowing casinos in tourist-filled Waikiki or on Native Hawaiian lands.

Proponents say casinos would draw much-needed new money and jobs into the long-troubled, tourism-dependent economy.

Tourists from the mainland would skip Las Vegas to sun on pristine beaches and take a turn at the roulette tables. Coveted high-rollers from Asia could avoid the long trans-Pacific flight, shortening their trip to the slots while also checking out the hula dancing.

And the hundreds of thousands of Hawaii residents who fly about six hours to Vegas would only have to jump in the car or hop a short flight to place a wager. Las Vegas is known around here as Hawaii's ninth island, and hotels in Nevada cater to the state's needs by serving island dishes and dealers wear flora aloha shirts.

"The populace here loves to gamble. Hawaii by nature is a gambling community," said Honolulu resident Ricky Graves, who travels to Las Vegas two or three times a year, but fears that casinos in Hawaii could ruin families by making it too easy for them to gamble away their money.

Gambling opponents are urging state legislators to block casinos so that the islands can maintain their status as a family-friendly destination lacking the serious crime and social problems they say accompanies legalized gambling elsewhere.

"People don't come here to be shut up in a casino to gamble," said Dianne Kay, president of the Hawaii Coalition Against Legalized Gambling. "It would be sad if we destroyed the beautiful ambiance we have here."

Islanders have a long history with gambling, dating back to the days of the Hawaiian kingdom when there was betting on horse racing, said Kale Gumapac, spokesman for the Native Hawaiian group Kanaka Council Moka o Keawe.

And illegal gambling is thriving today, with sports books, cock fighting and card houses the more popular forms. The Internet has also made gaming more accessible.

But the state's natural attractions and its religious missionary history have instilled a sense among many that gambling shouldn't intrude on one of the nation's last holdouts against it. Utah is the only other state where gambling is illegal, though Nevada is just next door.

"People in Hawaii like gambling, but they realize it's not a very good idea to legalize it," said Dennis Arakaki, head of the Hawaii Family Forum and Hawaii Catholic Conference. "Gambling isn't a good way to deal with your financial problems, either personally or as a state."

Police say legal gambling would increase crimes such as prostitution and drug dealing.

It's difficult to quantify the extent of the underground gambling operations, said Maj. Susan Dowsett of the Honolulu Police Department. The department made 40 gambling-related arrests and initiated 65 felony gambling cases in 2009, a fraction of overall arrests.

Gambling supporters dispute claims that legalized gambling would spread crime. They're more focused on the potential for gambling to jump-start the economy, especially if a casino could get running within a year as they claim.

Legislators view gambling as a rare opportunity to raise money without having to hike taxes, although they may not have the votes to override a potential veto. Republican Gov. Linda Lingle has said she opposes the introduction of gambling.

Lawmakers pitch gambling bills nearly ever year, but the measures rarely advance through several committees as they have this year.

One plan would set up a gaming commission to issue one five-year license to a casino on Oahu, which advocates say would create some 4,000 jobs and bring $100 million a year into state coffers through taxes on the casino.

Another would allow casinos on Hawaiian lands, with 80 percent of tax revenues going toward Native Hawaiians. That money could be used for more Hawaiian homes, better health coverage and financing for startup businesses, Gumapac said.

A casino in Waikiki would only need to be allowed under state law. But gambling on Hawaiian lands would be reviewed by the federal government before it could start, according to the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Opening a casino in the tourist-heavy Waikiki would help rejuvenate businesses and create jobs, business owners said.

"If I were a tourist, I'm coming here for the weather, the culture, the sightseeing. But one night I might go to the casino, because what other entertainment is there to do at night?" said James Boersema, an investor of a Waikiki nightclub and restaurant.

Kagman residents face 3-hour power outage this weekend

Portions of Kagman will experience a three-hour power outage this Sunday because of needed maintenance work.

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. said that maintenance schedule will take place in Kagman 3, Phase 4 and power supply will be cut from 7:30am to 10:30am.

CUC power division manager Gary Camacho said this maintenance work is part of CUC's continuing effort to improve power generation in Kagman.

"For the safety of the linemen, a power outage is scheduled for 7:30am through 10:30am as they address the main primary lateral to Phase 4," said Camacho, adding that the primary line will soon be re-energized and the line crew will focus on laterals throughout the remainder of the day.

Camacho pointed out that the power interruption will only cover the said laterals to perform the necessary repairs.

Saipan Tribune learned that the said maintenance project will involve the replacement of 76 deteriorated pole top pins along with other pole hardware.

Camacho said the extensive corrosion because of exposure to the elements requires these replacements to reinforce the circuit.

Furthermore, due to the consistent ocean salt spray in the Kagman area, the new replacement pole top pins are constructed with fiberglass shafts and are expected to be more dependable under the conditions, according to Camacho.

CUC, he said, apologizes for any inconvenience the power interruptions may impose on the community and the customers and will continue to work diligently to minimize future interruptions.

Last week, a five-hour power outage hit the southern part of Saipan after a cable leading to one of the transformers exploded in one of the two large substation transformers at Kiya.

To shorten the outage duration, the Kiya feeders were connected to Feeder 3 or Feeder 4. In January, CUC said there were at least 10 hours of outages on account of the distribution system and zero hours due to power generation.

CUC admitted that it needs to pull a team of industrial electricians from the power plant, combine with power distribution crews, plus one engineer to inspect substations on a regular basis to prevent the power interruptions from occurring.

The utilities firm is still in emergency declaration since 2008 because of the poor condition of its power facilities, water, and sewer system.

Last year, the government rented the $6 million Aggreko generators to eliminate the power interruptions in the island. Its service was stopped when improvements were done to the island's power plants. ***(Moneth G. Deposa)***

Lawmakers to attend NMI Developmental Disabilities forum

The CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities will sponsor a forum titled "Meet Your Policy Maker" on Rota, Tinian, and Saipan.

The first forum will take place on the island of Rota on Feb. 26, from 9am to 2pm at the Rota Round House and the panel will be members from the Rota Legislative Delegation.

On Tinian, the forum is scheduled for March 5, at the Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino from 6pm to 8pm and the panelists are members of the Tinian Legislative Delegation.

Saipan's forum is scheduled for March 26 at the Saipan World Resort from 9am to 2pm and the panelists are members from the Saipan Legislative Delegation.

The purpose of the forum is for individuals with disabilities to educate CNMI policymakers regarding disability issues in the CNMI. This forum will give individuals with disabilities and their family members an opportunity to provide their input on needs of persons with disabilities in the CNMI in the areas of education, transportation, employment, housing and health care.

The council is inviting consumers, family members, members of CNMI disability organizations and CNMI stakeholders to attend this important event.

Interested individuals requesting special accommodations are asked to notify the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities at least five days in advance of their special accommodations needs. This will give the organizers ample time to coordinate and provide the accommodation.

For more information, contact CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities Office at 664-7000/7001/7002. ***(PR)***

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NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 12, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairwoman of the Board, is hereby giving notice that a Regular Meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday, February 24, 2010, at 10:00 a.m. at the NMHC Conference Room in Garapan, Saipan. The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in advance at 670.234-6866/7689/7670 during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. thru 4:30 p.m., Monday thru Friday.

I. **PRELIMINARY MATTERS**
A. Call to Order
B. Roll Call
C. Adoption of Agenda

II. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES – November 19, 2009, Regular Meeting**

III. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

IV. **BOARD RESOLUTION NO. 75 - ADOPTION OF SECTION 8 ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN FOR RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

V. **ECONOMIC RECOVERY & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**
A. American Reinvestment & Recovery Act/Housing Economic Recovery Act (ARRA/HERA) - Updates
1. Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)
2. Homeless Prevention Recovery Program (HPRP)
3. Community Development Block Grant-Recovery (CDBG-R)
4. Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)
B. Status of Proposed Projects

VI. **HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**
A. Increase of Minimum Rent
B. Social Security
C. Utility Payments

VII. **MORTGAGE CREDIT PROGRAMS**
A. Status of Rural Development - Updates
B. Lease-To-Own
C. Other Loan Related Matters

VIII. **FIELD OFFICE REPORTS**

IX. **ADMIN & PROCUREMENT MATTERS**

X. **FISCAL MATTERS**

XI. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

XII. **OTHER MATTERS**
A. Garapan Annex Unit
B. Property Bid Proposals
C. Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)

XIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

NOTE: Pursuant to PL 8-41, Section 13(6) and (7), some discussion of the above may be under Executive Session.

/s/ MARCIE M. TOMOKANE
Chairwoman of the Board

NMHC is an equal housing provider, lender and employer.

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD MEETING

The regular monthly meeting of the Zoning Board will be held on Thursday, March 4, 2010 at 6:00 PM, Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten DanDan Bldg., Saipan

A. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes
5. Communications

B. Reports
1. Chairman
2. Secretary
3. Treasurer
4. Administrator
5. Committees
6. Legal Counsel

C. Public Comments

D. Permits/ Applications/ Rezones: review and decide.
1. Conditional Use application #2010-0389 – Saipan American Education Foundation School, portion of Lot EA 109-New-1-1, 109-New-1-R1 (Chalan Kiya)

E. Old Business.
1. Proposed amendments to Saipan Zoning Law of 2008
a. Update on proposed amendments to the 2008 Saipan Zoning Law (Presentation; no action)

F. New Business.
1. Update on Zoning Enforcement Activities
2. Update on Board's Public Outreach Program
3. Procedures and implementation of the Junk Cars Removal program

G. Executive (Closed) Session - Consult with Legal Counsel regarding pending or anticipated legal matters

H. Miscellaneous: Other Matters, Announcements, Next Meeting, Adjourn.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you require assistance, please contact Therese Ogumoro, Acting Zoning Administrator, at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & 10 CMC 3511, et seq.).

/s/ Herminia M. Fusco, Chair, Zoning Board

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Shoot 'em up in Richmond

In a rare moment of gun law sanity, Virginia enacted a bill 17 years ago limiting the purchase of handguns to one a month. Almost immediately, the numbers of guns traced to Virginia that were used in crimes in the Northeast, particularly in New York, dropped sharply. Now, thanks to Del. L. Scott Lingamfelter, a Prince William County Republican who is pushing to repeal the law, the Old Dominion may regain the dubious distinction of being a leading arsenal for criminals. Mr. Lingamfelter's measure cleared the House of Delegates in Richmond this week and is headed for the state Senate. It was backed mainly by House Republicans, for whom the purchase of a dozen handguns annually is apparently not enough.

Although it may be news to Mr. Lingamfelter, who compares limiting gun purchases to limiting church attendance, guns are often used in the commission of violent crimes, and the state has a legitimate interest in regulating their sale to protect public safety. Mr. Lingamfelter's assertion that the current law is obsolete is simply untrue. And to argue that it is ineffective because so many buyers are exempt (such as Virginians who hold permits to carry concealed weapons) only raises the question of why the commonwealth has shot holes in what is a highly useful law enforcement tool.

At the time the law was passed, in 1993, it was pushed not only by the then-governor, L. Douglas Wilder, a Democrat, but also by a bipartisan coalition of law enforcement groups, businesses and the Justice Department of President George H.W. Bush. Mr. Lingamfelter argues that advances in technology mean that gun sellers can now verify that buyers are not felons instantaneously through the National Instant Check System, which didn't exist when the law was passed. But plenty of corrupt gun dealers circumvent the system by selling guns off the books or to straw buyers. And while the one-gun limit does not stop all those sales, it's a deterrent, since it applies to straw buyers as well.

We hope reason prevails, and the state Senate kills the repeal. Because if Mr. Lingamfelter's bill is enacted, here's what police and prosecutors expect: Crack dealers in New York will pay 21 year olds with no criminal records to buy dozens of Glock pistols at Virginia gun shops. When those guns end up sold to criminals on the streets of the Bronx or traded for cocaine, New Yorkers will have the General Assembly to thank — and Gov. Robert F. McDonnell, R, if he signs the bill.

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Higher inflation a lousy cure for meltdowns

By CAROLINE BAUM
(c) 2010, Bloomberg News

Caroline Baum, author of "Just What I Said," is a Bloomberg News columnist.

Policy makers are looking for measures to avert the next financial crisis. Most of the proposed solutions involve enhanced regulation. Economists at the International Monetary Fund have a better idea: higher inflation.

Yes, that's right. After a multi-decade effort to become credible and anchor inflation expectations, central banks are now supposed to throw it all away in order to have more room to maneuver in financial crises.

Start with the inflation target, or ceiling, most central banks have adopted of 2 percent, multiply by five, add six, divide by four, and bingo! That's the new, improved inflation target of 4 percent, according to IMF economists Olivier Blanchard, Giovanni Dell'Ariccia and Paolo Mauro, authors of a new paper, "Rethinking Macroeconomic Policy."

Explicit inflation targeting has always been controversial for central banks with a dual mandate. The Federal Reserve, for example, is required to deliver stable prices and maximum sustainable employment. Some Fed officials eschew an explicit inflation target, preferring to retain the flexibility to respond to economic crises with lower interest rates even if inflation is above a target.

Just Tuesday, Bank of England Governor Mervyn King had to inform Chancellor of the Exchequer Alistair Darling about his plan to rein in the 3.5 percent year-over-year increase in British consumer prices in January, something he's required to provide when inflation exceeds the bank's 2 percent target by more than 1 percentage point. King attributed the outsized gain to "short-run factors," not a deterioration in the medium-term inflation outlook. In New Zealand, the central bank governor can be dismissed for failure to hit the policy target.

Stable prices and full employment used to be thought of as polar opposites. Experience taught us they're mutually exclusive. It turns out price stability is both an end in itself and a means to another end: achieving maximum long-run employment.

So what are we to make of the academic argument for a higher inflation target?

Many central banks lowered their benchmark policy rates to near zero in response to the financial crisis. The "zero bound," as it's known, circumscribes the path for nominal rates and may produce high real rates in the case of "deflationary recessions," the economists point out. It doesn't inhibit a central bank's ability to increase bank reserves by buying assets or making loans.

Still, the zero bound has proven "costly," the economists write. "Higher average inflation, and thus higher nominal interest rates to start with, would have made it possible to cut interest rates more, thereby probably reduce the drop in output and the deterioration of fiscal positions," they say.

In other words, inflation needs to be higher so the Fed can push rates lower. That makes sense.

By that reasoning, if 4 percent is good, 8 percent should be better and 10 percent better yet!

It's not just monetary policy where the IMF economists think the authorities need room. Fiscal policy needs space, too.

"Some advanced economies that entered the crisis with high levels of debt and large unfunded liabilities have had limited ability to use fiscal policy," they say.

They must be referring to the United States, with its $56.5 trillion in unfunded liabilities, which clearly did nothing to discourage trillions of dollars of expenditures on controversial bailouts and stimulus programs.

What planet do these academics live on? Last May Harvard University economists Ken Rogoff and Greg Mankiw joined a chorus advocating higher inflation. Rogoff lobbied "for at least 6 percent for a couple of years" to help the deleveraging process while Mankiw saw inflation as a better alternative to more stimulus packages and higher national debt.

"I don't understand how anyone who lived through the 1970s can say that," says Bill Poole, a senior fellow at Washington's Cato Institute and former president of the St. Louis Fed.

Poole says it's very unlikely inflation expectations could be stabilized at 4 percent or that the fiscal system could be indexed for inflation on a timely basis. Long-term interest rates would rise, delivering capital losses to bondholders. Higher inflation would punish savers—something the nation could use more of. It would lead to inefficient allocation of capital. And it would sacrifice hard-won central bank credibility—for what? Breathing room in case of another hundred-year flood?

Prevention still seems like the best cure for financial crises. And like many Fed policy makers, Blanchard et al claim the fed funds rate is a "poor tool" for curbing financial excesses.

It may be. But when it comes to driving those excesses, nothing beats negative real rates. Government can require more capital, end the tax subsidy on leverage, as Poole suggests, and hope that regulators do what they're supposed to do. In the end, they'll be swimming upstream unless someone pulls the proverbial punchbowl.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Mudanjiang Manhattan

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

That the visible commercialization of China is central to the new global economy is undisputed. Cheap labor is where the world's department stores, miniaturized electronic gizmos, and boutique quality but bargain basement priced garment industries ran to for the profitable manufacture of their products. China's cheap labor is now flushed with cash. Sam's and Price Costco in the U.S. became bulk sellers of China-made commodities, which make it understandable why China is holding a substantial portion of Uncle Sam's treasury bills!

Looking more like a prairie settlement in the middle of Kansas, Mudanjiang was our accidental stop out of curiosity. I expected a non-descript agricultural settlement in the middle of nowhere. (*Jiang* means "river," and when the word is appended to a place's name, it is for sure a settlement along a river.)

I thought I was getting an afternoon train from Tumen to Mudanjiang but the ticket listed a 04.25 departure. That's morning by global reckoning. So I braved freezing weather three hours past midnight to walk to the train station, only to find out that I was 30 minutes early. The waiting room was still closed. I hobbled to the Police next door but was told that I was not allowed to loiter in the premises. Homeland security is not just a U.S. preoccupation. Happily, the waiting room opened in time, just before my chops started to chatter, and my shaky knees began to wobble!

Getting into metropolitan Mudanjiang was a relief. Failure to connect to the Internet for two days was too much isolation for this socially networked urban soul, and to find in Mudanjiang accommodations where the hot water ran 24/7, one did not have to squat, and the TV DSL-equipped, was nothing short of miraculous.

Mudanjiang is definitely a product of urban planning. The downtown area is a precise nine by seven set of square blocks, with each divided into diverse sizes of four-sided neighborhoods. I went looking for an HSBC (there was none) upon being denied by the hotel the use of my MC; competitor Visa cornered the market in the Summer Olympics. China Bank processed currencies went my remaining Ben Franklins.

The streets were pretty deserted, which I thought was strange considering that cash-flushed Chinese consumers would be out on droves after the red envelopes of *Kung Hee Fat Chai* were liberally passed out. So I went for my ¥4 (¥6.7=$1) *wonton* soup, cased the downtown for Wi-Fi cafes, bought fruits and nuts from a local retail store, shelled $2 for DVD copies of *Invictus* (Matt Damon and Freeman) and *Kung Zi (Confucius),* and retired to the warm ambience of the hotel.

Ten o'clock in the evening was two early for a bona fide night owl so I went looking for roasted chestnuts. I was not that lucky; returning to the hotel, there were a few young adults on 2nd floor seeking lucky lady and fated fortune in card games and mahjong tables. It appears that the hotel runs illicit gaming tables for those in the fast lane.

IT&E Ricky Delgado recently called us to be realistic about our neighbors' traditions of chasing prosperity through the turn of a dice or the randomly shuffled face of a card. Or, dabble on anything that can quickly return profit on investment. Judeo-Christian-Muslim traditions condemn usury, and for good reason. Many a rich family's prodigal child lose their inheritance in get rich quick schemes like the gaming tables, one story being a famous parable told by the Nazarene.

It appears that some of Mao's nouveau riche progeny of the one-child family get their kicks in games of chance. One wonders what other ancillary activities this culture of gambling has spawned. British traders once fanned the fires of opium consumption to balance their trade of tea and silk, and the Boxer rebellion went after gamblers. The previous offerings of Hong Kong's Wan Chai and Kowloon districts are well known. What fully lurks now in the evening pleasures of China's pampered young in *Dong Bei,* we can only speculate.

I had five hours the day after between hotel check out and my train to Harbin, so I bundled up like a penguin to waddle along the streets. The pedestrian traffic like the day before was sparse though this time, the sun mercifully showed up. I found in the middle of town a circular park that led into warrens of what Chinese are known for around the world: a lively preoccupation with trade and commerce. At the park was a two-storey ice sculpture of bottled Pepsi water, a real sign of the times! In the tunnels were where the population was this cold February day. They were shopping their hearts' out in stalls and shops that would shame the bazaars of Beirut, Baghdad, and Bombay. I entered the East Manhattan Shopping Mall section, and the first shop I saw was called "Broadway"! The Silk Road to Samarkand is alive!

Two notables: a store named Guezi had products resembling Gucci's. A "checkmark" logo of athletic paraphernalia and attire has a slogan that declares "All is Possible," not too distant from the looks and marketing style of a similar Tiger Woods endorsed product that says, "Just Do It." Dare we say more?

Manhattan's marketing and Milan's designs has subdued the Chinese. Some lady shoppers were wearing short pants with tight nylon leggings and sporting Princess Lea Ashanti-inspired braided hairs on five-inch stiletto heels. With ice still on the ground, the fashion statement is patent Fifth Avenue. Most of the shops carried garments and shoes. Beauty shops and the Mall belie the claim once jokingly offered by a lady friend that they were built like the Great Wall, strong and solidly flat on the sides. Traditional attire do hide the body, even wrapping gauze around their breast to keep them flat. This is not so now, except that in recent years, the increase in breast enhancement in China is alarming.

Being of the "small is beautiful" school and holding dear the Buddhist penchant for simple elegance, and leaving alone the natural processes of the earth, I was a bit dismayed at the Hong Kong, Ginza, Nanjing Rd. glitter domination of the city. My pedestrian taste was held to account, and plebian legs took off quickly before my proletarian heart started to shed tears!

5 myths about the census

By WILLIAM H. FREY
Special to The Washington Post

William H. Frey is a demographer and senior fellow in the Metropolitan Policy Program at the Brookings Institution and a research professor at the University of Michigan's Population Studies Center.

Every 10 years, we have to count people. At least that's what Article 1, Section 2 of the Constitution says. It doesn't sound too complicated. But it is. Who gets counted, and how, determines not only congressional representation but how funding is distributed for a slew of federal programs that affect all of us. As we prepare to stand and be counted in 2010—and the U.S. Census Bureau is spending a lot of advertising money to make sure that everyone is—let's note a few misconceptions about our population and the efforts to tally us up.

Immigration is the biggest force behind the nation's racial and ethnic diversity.

1 If immigration stopped today, we would still see substantial gains in our minority populations for decades to come. Recent Census Bureau projections showed that under a "no further immigration" scenario, the minority share of our population would rise from about 35 percent today to 42 percent in 2050. The preschool (under age 5) population would become minority white. The greater minority presence would arise from higher natural-increase rates for minorities than for the aging white population. This momentum is already in place: Since 2000, natural population increase accounted for 62 percent of the growth of Hispanics, the country's largest minority group, with immigration responsible for the rest.

Already, Washington, D.C., and four states (Hawaii, New Mexico, California and Texas) are minority white, and in six more, whites are less than 60 percent of the population. Minorities now make up more than 30 percent of the residents in half of the nation's congressional districts, compared with a quarter in 1992.

The census will tell us more about the dispersal of Hispanics and other groups to traditional white enclaves—suburbs and the country's midsection. A majority of all Hispanic, black and Asian residents of major metro areas now live in the suburbs. And since 2000, according to recent estimates, the fastest Hispanic growth occurred in South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee and Arkansas.

Color lines within our population are blurring in a different way, too, with people who identify with more than one race. The number of mixed-race married couples more than doubled since 1990, and they make up nearly 8 percent of all marriages.

The country is getting uniformly older.

1 As a baby boomer, I am part of a demographic mob. As we age over the next 20 years, the nation as a whole will see a surge in senior citizens. But different parts of the country will be aging at different rates, largely because selective "younging" is going on. This is evident from census estimates showing that during the first nine years of this decade, 25 states — mostly in the Northeast, Midwest and Great Plains — and Washington, D.C., exhibited absolute declines in their child populations, while 25 others, led by Nevada and Arizona, showed gains.

This variation in where families and children live is poised to shape a young-old regional divide that could intensify over time. Census projections for 2020, made earlier this decade, showed median ages over 40 in Maine, West Virginia and Pennsylvania, compared with below 36 in Utah, Texas, Georgia and California.

Big states will keep getting bigger — especially in Congress.

3 For much of the postwar period, the Sunbelt megastates of California, Florida and Texas just kept growing: They led all other states in adding congressional seats based on censuses since World War II. But the economic turbulence of this past decade will affect their political fortunes. Florida was one of the nation's growth leaders for the first half of the decade and was poised to gain as many as three congressional seats after the 2010 Census, tying or overtaking New York's congressional delegation. But the mortgage meltdown led to an unprecedented exodus from the state in the past two years. Florida's likely gain of one seat will be its smallest addition since the 1940 Census.

California is not positioned to gain any seats for the first time since statehood in 1850. Despite its status as an immigration magnet, the Golden State lost large numbers of people fleeing high housing costs during the bubble years. California might have even lost a seat had that bubble not burst.

Of the three Sunbelt behemoths, Texas will take the biggest prize, probably four congressional seats—its largest increase since the 1880 Census. It was largely immune from the housing crisis late in the decade, while it gained Katrina-driven migrants from Louisiana.

The census is the main source of information about our population.

4 Not as much as before. Unlike previous censuses, the 2010 count will provide only bare-bones information that does little more than fulfill its constitutional mandate. The questions will include the age, sex, race, Hispanic origin and household relationship status of each individual, and the size and homeownership status of each household.

What happened to all the rich data on poverty, income, ancestry, immigration, marital status and some 30 other categories we have come to expect from the census? Those "long form" questions have been given to a sample of census respondents in every count going back to 1940 — but they won't be handed out this year. The queries have been diverted to the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS).

In 2005, the bureau began administering the ACS to 3 million households each year to elicit the same kind of information that was previously available only every 10 years. This large and sophisticated survey has already provided important and timely insights on changing poverty, immigration and migration patterns in this economic roller coaster of a decade.

New technology gives us much more demographic data than the census can.

5 Not true. Technological developments and data collected via the Internet do give us new ways of looking at the population, and complex surveys and estimates conducted by the Census Bureau and other organizations allow us to monitor change over the decade—but there is no substitute for counting everyone. Aside from the census' constitutional mandate to provide the basis for congressional apportionment, a national headcount also allows us to know how many people live in the nation's cities, suburbs and neighborhoods and to break them down according to race, age and gender.

There are plenty of examples of a decennial census surprising the experts. The 2000 Census, for instance, discovered sharp population surges in many old, large cities. This was unanticipated for Chicago, which had experienced decades of decline. And the spread of the nation's Hispanic population into new states such as North Carolina far exceeded expectations.

Many government and private surveys, including the ACS, rely on the decennial census to make sure their work accurately reflects the population as a whole.

This census will also tell us more about small but growing groups, such as same-sex married partners and multiracial populations, whose presence and interests can change laws and public policies.

The Census Bureau's ad campaign urges Americans to answer "10 Questions in 10 Minutes"—and those are still 10 very important questions, whose responses will guide us for the next 10 years.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲83	▼74
Palau	Sunny	▲89	▼77
Yap	Sunny	▲87	▼76
Chuuk	Partly Sunny	▲89	▼79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲86	▼75
Kosrae	Sunny	▲88	▼75
Majuro	Showers	▲84	▼76

Around The Globe

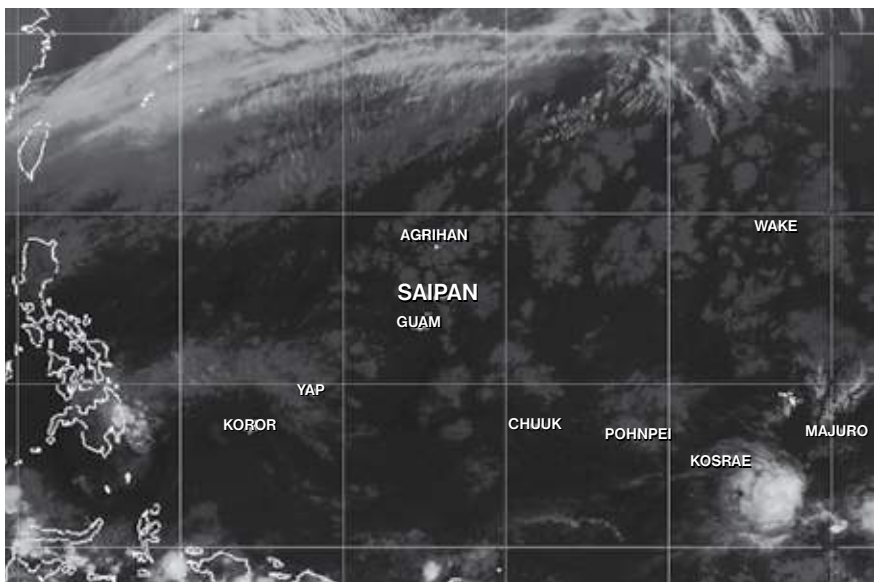
Auckland	Sunny	▲75	▼61
Beijing	Sunny	▲47	▼32
Hong Kong	Partly Sunny	▲67	▼61
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲77	▼67
London	Rain/Snow	▲44	▼37
Los Angeles	Rain	▲62	▼50
Manila	Sunny	▲91	▼75
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	▲91	▼71
Miami	Partly Sunny	▲75	▼60
New York	Partly Sunny	▲42	▼30
Osaka	Partly Sunny	▲46	▼32
Paris	Partly Sunny	▲40	▼34
Pusan	Sunny	▲52	▼35
Rome	Dreary	▲51	▼38
Salem	Partly Sunny	▲51	▼31
San Francisco	Rain	▲58	▼50
Seoul	Sunny	▲44	▼25
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲48	▼33
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲42	▼29

Tides

Saipan Harbor

5:00 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.8 Feet
10:55 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
6:06 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2010
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front cuts southwestward across the northwest corner of the discussion area from near Iwo To island at 25N147E to beyond 130E at 20N. Extensive cloudiness and widespread rain are found along and northwest of the cold front to beyond 25N. A low-level trough reaches northward from 1N133E to 15N136E. Scattered showers are occurring in the vicinity of the trough over Yap but north of Koror within 80 miles of a line from 8N130E to 11N134E to 12N137E to 7N140E. Trade-wind convergence is causing widely scattered showers over Pohnpei but north of Kosrae between 6N and 11N from 156E to 165E. Divergent upper-level winds are adding additional lift to generate scattered showers and a few thunderstorms over Tarawa and Butaritari atolls between the equator and 5N from 165E to 180.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:39 AM	6:22 PM
Sunday	6:39 AM	6:23 PM
Monday	6:38 AM	6:23 PM
Tuesday	6:38 AM	6:23 PM
Wednesday	6:37 AM	6:23 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	10:09 AM	11:18 PM
Sunday	10:55 AM	
Monday	11:46 AM	12:15 AM
Tuesday	12:43 PM	1:14 AM
Wednesday	1:44 PM	2:14 AM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 28, 2010

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:30am	12:05pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:40pm	1:10pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:30am	1:10pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:20pm	1:10pm	4, 5
C09603	3:15pm	4:05pm	Daily
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:20pm	10:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

NW287	6:00am	7:30pm	Daily via NRT
NW638	8:00am	10:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

NW287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
NW297	4:45pm	7:30pm	Daily
NW289	5:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 6:40am, leave OSA 9:30am	
OZ606	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

CA8282	3:15am	7:00am	1, 5

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ604/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ604/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ608/705	3:20am	1:30am+1	1, 4, 5, 7 via PUS
C09603/893	3:15pm	9:10pm	3, 5 via GUM-PALAU
OZ606/715	3:20pm	11:30pm	7 via ICN
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:10am	3:45am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:00am	2:30am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:00am	2:50am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09598	2:00am	3:45am	5, 6 via ROP
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	4:50pm	5:40pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

NW288	12:05pm	1:35am+1	Daily via NRT effective Jan 25
NW277	8:30pm	1:00am+1	3, 6
NW639	9:00pm	1:35am+1	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

NW290	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily
NW298	10:05am	2:50pm	Daily
NW288	9:00pm	1:35am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 8:50pm, leave OSA 9:50pm	
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

CA8281	6:40pm	1:55am+1	4, 7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ716/605	12:30am	2:20pm	4, 6 via ICN
OZ706/607	3:35am	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via PUS
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C09596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0892/9596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	3,5 via PALAU-GUM
C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
OZ704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2 ,4 ,6, 7 via ICN
OZ750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4 ,6 ,7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CA: China Airlines; CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
9:00 AM
Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158
Pastor JJ Matsumoto

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am– 12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church
(Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio

Sunday	9am	Sunday school
	10am	Regular worship
	6pm	worship
Wednesday	7pm	worship

Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries

Sunday Morning prayer	5:30am-6:30am	
	7am-9am	English service
	7am-9am	Sunday school
	10am-12noon	English service, Koblerville
Wednesday	7pm-9pm	Prayer meeting
Saturday	7pm-9pm	Tagalog service

Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Feb. 20, 2001

Modest growth in hotel occupancy taxes noted
The amount of revenues generated by the CNMI government from hotel occupancy taxes inched up a modest four percent in the first nine months of the Fiscal Year 2000, but analysts said this does not mean the sector is in for a fruitful year. Records from the Department of Finance disclosed collections from hotel occupancy taxes climbed to $4.7 million in the first three quarters of the last financial year, up by only $200,000 from FY1999. Business analysts said the slight increase in hotel occupancy tax collections last year does not give hoteliers any reason to celebrate, considering the fact that the quarterly average of $1.57 million is way below than the pre-crisis level of $2.7 million.

Workers to get additional sick leave from proposed measure
Employees who have yet to recover fully from their illnesses can now heave a collective sigh of relief. This, after the Senate passed an amendment to a section of the current sick leave law last Feb. 9. Senate findings showed that under 1 CMC Section 8273 of Public Law 8-25, employees who have not fully recovered from their serious illness were denied the use of additional sick leave hours due to the limitations imposed by the Civil Service Sick Leave Bank Regulations. Under the amended law, employees can apply for an additional 160 hours of sick leave, on top of the original 160 hours, if he or she is not fit enough to go back to work because of his or her illness.

Feb. 20, 2002

CPA seeks explanation on PIA plane incidents
The Commonwealth Ports Authority wants the Pacific Island Aviation to explain why it held some 19 passengers inside its aircraft despite a looming accident that could have placed their lives in danger. This, as the CPA anticipates to receive today a complete report on the two incidents that involved PIA aircraft. CPA Executive Director Carlos H. Salas yesterday received a preliminary report that explained the technical problem encountered by PIA Flight No. 3824 on Tinian, as well as on the blown-off tire incident at the Saipan International Airport.

OPA, AGO tie up to unclog pending recommendations
In a bid to beat any statute of limitations, the Attorney Ge-neral's Office is now coordinating with the Office of the Public Auditor to follow through on prior recommendations made by the OPA that have remained backlogged or have not been acted upon. Attorney General Robert T. Torres said he and his attorneys have already met with Public Auditor Michael S. Sablan and his investigators to go over previous OPA recommendations, particularly those that pushed for the filing of civil and criminal lawsuits. "We sat down and talked about it and looked at the matters that are pending and there's no reason why we shouldn't act now," he said. "We're now receiving the recommendations for civil matters-everything from collecting against government employees for abuse or misuse of funds-as well as matters recommending criminal prosecutions."

Feb. 20, 2003

What's next for Puerto Rico?
The answer to that remains to be seen. And totally eliminating the eyesore would require moving mountains. Public Works Secretary Juan S. Reyes said the end-goal is to literally remove the mountainous stockpile of trash at Puerto Rico. There have been plans to even convert the area into a park. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, however, requires the CNMI to have closure and post-closure plans for the dumpsite. "We're going to cap it. We'll cap it with some liner," said Reyes. He said the dump would also be covered with soil and clay.

Heinz opposes proposed tax hikes
House Speaker Heinz S. Hofschneider admitted there is reluctance among House members to support several of the Administration's tax hike proposals under its Integrated Fiscal Plan, doubtful as they are that CNMI consumers can still afford to shoulder additional tax burdens. Hofschneider was referring specifically to Gov. Juan N. Babauta's recommendations to raise the hotel occupancy tax from 10 to 11 percent and to add $100 on top of the existing nonresident work permit fee rate, among others.

Business

Toyota chief agrees to testify before Congress,950

Toyoda

WASHINGTON (AP)—Toyota president Akio Toyoda said Thursday he will testify at a congressional hearing next week about the automaker's massive recalls in the United States, meeting face to face with lawmakers after enduring criticism that he responded too slowly to the company's safety crisis.

Toyoda, the grandson of the Japanese automaker's founder, said in a statement he looks "forward to speaking directly with Congress and the American people."

The auto executive accepted the invitation from the chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee as the government opened a fresh investigation into Corolla compacts over potential steering problems. Toyota has faced a burgeoning safety crisis over the past four months with the recall of roughly 8.5 million vehicles over questions involving gas pedals, accelerators getting jammed in floor mats and brakes on various vehicles.

Rep. Edolphus Towns, D-N.Y., told Toyoda in his invitation that motorists were "unsure as to what exactly the problem is, whether it is safe to drive their cars, or what they should do about it." Towns and the committee's top Republican, Rep. Darrell Issa of California, said later that Toyoda's testimony "will be helpful in understanding the actions Toyota is taking to ensure the safety of American drivers."

Toyoda had said previously that he did not plan to attend a series of hearings scheduled to start on Capitol Hill next week. But he had told reporters in Japan earlier that he would consider appearing if invited.

The decision to testify came as the Transportation Department formally opened a preliminary investigation into 487,000 Toyota Corolla and Corolla Matrix compacts from the 2009-2010 model years over concerns about steering problems at highway speeds. The government has received 168 complaints and reports of 11 injuries and eight crashes on the Corolla and Matrix compacts with electric power steering.

Job market improvement may be slowing, data show

WASHINGTON (AP)—Layoffs aren't slowing as fast as some analysts had expected.

That was the message Thursday in a government report that the number of people filing first-time claims for unemployment benefits rose unexpectedly last week. Jobless claims rose by 31,000 to a seasonally adjusted 473,000.

The increase followed a drop of 41,000 in the previous week. The earlier figure had raised hopes that the job market was improving steadily.

The four-week average for claims dipped 1,500 to 467,500, near the lows at the end of last year. The average smooths out week-to-week volatility. But many economists say the four-week average would need to fall consistently below 425,000 to signal that the economy is close to generating net job gains. The economy has lost 8.4 million jobs since the recession began in December 2007.

Further evidence that the pace of the economic recovery is slowing was a private research group's forecast of economic activity. The Conference Board's index of leading economic indicators rose for a 10th straight month in January, but the rate of increase is easing. The index is designed to forecast activity in the next three to six months.

Many economists have raised concern that growth will stagnate this year as government support programs wind down and unemployment remains high.

The key message from the leading indicators is that the recovery from the worst recession since the 1930s is plodding ahead—"stumbling at times, but it is moving forward," said Jennifer Lee, senior economist at BMO Capital Markets.

Analysts say the closing of businesses and government offices last week because of snowstorms might have prevented some newly unemployed workers from filing their initial claims for unemployment benefits.

The figures were collected as the government also was gathering information for the February report on the unemployment rate and employer payrolls. The severe weather may distort those figures, too, economists said. That could make it hard to get an accurate picture of the job market for several weeks.

Even so, some analysts said the latest figures are a cautionary signal.

Nation

Man angry at IRS crashes plane into building

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—A software engineer furious with the Internal Revenue Service launched a suicide attack on the agency Thursday by crashing his small plane into an office building containing nearly 200 IRS employees, setting off a raging fire that sent workers running for their lives.

At least one person in the building was missing.

The FBI tentatively identified the pilot as Joseph A. Stack, 53. Law enforcement officials, speaking on condition of anonymity because the investigation was still going on, said that before taking off, Stack apparently set fire to his house and posted a long anti-government screed on the Web. It was dated Thursday and signed "Joe Stack (1956-2010)."

In it, the author cited run-ins he had with the IRS and ranted about the tax agency, government bailouts and corporate America's "thugs and plunderers."

AP

Vehicle traffic is shown on U.S. Highway 183 as a damaged building is shown at rear, Thursday, Feb. 18, 2010, in Austin, Texas. Authorities said that Joseph Stack flew his small plane into the building that housed several employees of the IRS.

"I have had all I can stand," he wrote, adding: "I choose not to keep looking over my shoulder at `big brother' while he strips my carcass."

The pilot took off in a single-engine Piper Cherokee from an airport in Georgetown, about 30 miles from Austin, without filing a flight plan. He flew low over the Austin skyline before plowing into the side of the hulking, seven-story, black-glass building just before 10 a.m. with a thunderous explosion that instantly stirred memories of Sept. 11.

Flames shot from the building, windows exploded, a huge pillar of black smoke rose over the city, and terrified workers rushed to get out.

The Pentagon scrambled two F-16 fighter jets from Houston to patrol the skies over the burning building before it became clear that it was the act of a lone pilot, and President Barack Obama was briefed.

"It felt like a bomb blew off," said Peggy Walker, an IRS revenue officer who was sitting at her desk. "The ceiling caved in and windows blew in. We got up and ran."

Stack was presumed dead, though police said they had not recovered his body as of Thursday evening. At least 13 people were injured, with two reported in critical condition. About 190 IRS employees work in the building.

Gerry Cullen was eating breakfast at a restaurant across the street when the plane struck the building and "vanished in a fireball."

Matt Farney, who was in the parking lot of a nearby Home Depot, said he saw a low-flying plane near some apartments just before it crashed. "I figured he was going to buzz the apartments or he was showing off," Farney said. "It was insane. It didn't look like he was out of control or anything."

Sitting at her desk in another building a half-mile from the crash, Michelle Santibanez felt the vibrations and ran to the windows, where she and her co-workers witnessed a scene that reminded them of 9/11.

"It was the same kind of scenario, with window panels falling out and desks falling out and paperwork flying," said Santibanez, an accountant.

Dalai Lama gets an upbeat but quiet Obama welcome

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama personally welcomed the Dalai Lama to the White House Thursday and lauded his goals for the Tibetan people, but he kept their get-together off-camera and low-key in an attempt to avoid inflaming tensions with China.

At the risk of angering Beijing, Obama did tell the exiled spiritual leader that he backs the preservation of Tibet's culture and supports human rights for its people. He also gave encouragement to the Dalai Lama's request for talks with the Chinese government

Meetings between the Dalai Lama and U.S. presidents became standard fare under former President George H.W. Bush nearly 20 years ago. But the choreography is always delicate and closely watched because of China's sensitivity.

Revered in much of the world, the Dalai Lama is seen by Beijing as a separatist seeking to overthrow Chinese rule of Tibet. Though he says that is untrue, China regards any official foreign leader's contact with the Buddhist monk as an infringement on its sovereignty over the mountainous region and as a particularly unwelcome snub. China had urged Obama not to meet with the Dalai Lama.

Obama keeps all-Democratic health care option open

WASHINGTON (AP)—The White House signaled Thursday that an aggressive, all-Democratic strategy for overhauling the nation's health care system remains a serious option, even as President Barack Obama invites Republicans to next week's televised summit to seek possible compromises.

The administration's stance could set the stage for a political showdown, with Democrats struggling to enact the president's top domestic priority and Republicans trying to block what many conservatives see as government overreach.

A senior administration official said Democratic congressional leaders have nearly finished efforts to reconcile two health bills, which the House and Senate passed separately last year with practically no Republican help. Obama will use their legislation to expand coverage to some 30 million and require most Americans to carry insurance as the basis for a proposal that the White House will post online by Monday, three days before the Feb. 25 summit, said the official.

He spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss private negotiations.

Obama says he is open to Republican ideas for changing the health care system. But many Democrats seriously doubt GOP leaders will support compromises that could draw enough lawmakers from both parties to create a bipartisan majority.

If next week's meeting does not break the logjam, congressional Democrats will face a tough choice. They can pass a highly diluted health care bill or nothing at all, which would send them into the November elections with a high-profile failure despite their control of Congress and the White House.

Lawyer: Prof. accused in slayings likely insane

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (AP)—The lawyer for an Alabama college professor accused of killing three colleagues during a faculty meeting said Thursday he believes the teacher is insane, and that she says she can't remember the shootings.

Bishop

Amy Bishop, who has a doctorate from Harvard University and has taught at the University of Alabama in Huntsville since 2003, has severe mental problems that appear to be paranoid schizophrenia, said Roy W. Miller, her court-appointed attorney.

Miller spoke in an interview with The Associated Press on the same day hundreds of mourners attended the first funeral and memorial services for Bishop's slain co-workers.

Bishop's failure to obtain tenure at the University of Alabama in Huntsville was likely a key to the shootings last Friday, Miller said. Miller said the Harvard-educated Bishop apparently was incensed that a lesser-known school rejected her for what amounted to a lifetime job.

"Obviously she was very distraught and concerned over that tenure," Miller said. "It insulted her and slapped her in the face, and it's probably tied in with the Harvard mentality. She brooded and brooded and brooded over it, and then, `bingo.'"

Authorities said three more people were hurt when Bishop pulled out a handgun and started shooting during a routine meeting with colleagues. Charged with capital murder and attempted murder, she is being held without bond.

Miller said Bishop seems "very cogent" in jail, where he has spent more than three hours with her over two days, yet she also seems to realize she has a loose grip on reality.

"She gets at issue with people that she doesn't need to and obsesses on it," Miller said. "She won't shake it off, and it's really (things of) no great consequence."

Bishop, who claims an IQ of 180, can't explain the shootings, he said.

"She says she does not remember anything about it," said Miller.

ACROSS THE NATION

Fed probe urged on cancer chemical in Marine water

WILMINGTON, N.C. (AP)—A North Carolina congressman said Thursday that he wants an investigation into reports that levels of a cancer-causing chemical in tap water at a Marine Corps base were downplayed and then omitted from official documents. Democratic Rep. Brad Miller called for the probe by his House science subcommittee Thursday—a day after The Associated Press reported on new documents that indicate massive fuel leaks at Camp Lejeune and high concentrations of benzene found in a water well there in 1984. "I am just disbelieving of their failure to act. It may have been worse than a failure to act. They may have acted to minimize or prevent the risk from being disclosed," Miller told the Associated Press on Thursday. "It is hard to imagine they would let this go on. There was too much information that they had to have consciously disregarded."

4 accused of nabbing Texas man later found slain

EL PASO, Texas (AP)—Authorities filed aggravated kidnapping charges against four men in the abduction of a Texas man who was later found slain in a Mexican street with his arms chopped off. Investigators haven't determined whether Sergio Saucedo was killed in the U.S. or Mexico, and they could bring further charges once they do. Brothers Omar and Cesar Obregon, both 21-year-old illegal immigrants from Mexico, were arrested Wednesday by U.S. Border Patrol agents who spotted them trying to break into a house, El Paso County Sheriff's Cmdr. Paul Cross said Thursday. They were being held at the El Paso County jail on $250,000 bond each, Cross said.

Suit: Pa. school used webcams to spy on students

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—A suburban Philadelphia school district used the webcams in school-issued laptops to spy on students at home, potentially catching them and their families in compromising situations, a family claims in a federal lawsuit. Lower Merion School District officials would not comment on the accusation, but angry students have already responded by putting tape on their laptop cameras and microphones. Sophomore Tom Halpern described students as "pretty disgusted," and noted that his class recently read "1984," the George Orwell classic that coined the term "Big Brother." "This is just bogus," said Halpern, 15, of Wynnewood, as he left Harriton High School on Thursday with his taped-up computer. "I just think it's really despicable that they have the ability to just watch me all the time."

Asia

China protests Obama meeting with Dalai Lama

AP

The Dalai Lama gestures while speaking to reporters outside his hotel in Washington, Thursday, Feb. 18, 2010.

BEIJING (AP)—China on Friday protested President Barack Obama's meeting with the Dalai Lama, saying Washington had interfered in Chinese domestic affairs and demanding that the U.S. take steps to improve ties.

Vice Foreign Minister Cui Tiankai summoned U.S. ambassador to China Jon Huntsman to lodge a "solemn representation" over Thursday's meeting at the White House, the ministry said in a statement posted on its Web site.

"The behavior of the U.S. side seriously interferes in China's internal politics and seriously hurts the national feelings of the Chinese people," the statement said, quoting spokesman Ma Zhaoxu.

The meeting was seen as another test of rocky ties between Beijing and Washington, strained in recent weeks by issues from Taiwan arms sales to cyber spying allegations.

However, the language of the protest issued by the Foreign Ministry was relatively constrained, a reflection of the White House's low-key treatment of the meeting with the exiled Tibetan leader and Beijing's own desire to maintain healthy China-U.S. relations. The meeting was in the White House's Map Room, a lower-profile venue than the Oval Office.

In his statement, Ma expressed "strong dissatisfaction and resolute opposition" to the meeting.

"The Chinese side demands that the U.S. side seriously consider China's stance, immediately adopt measures to wipe out the baneful impact and stop conniving and supporting anti-China separatist forces that seek Tibet independence," said the statement, posted on the ministry's Web site.

US Marine general says Okinawa troops not a burden

TOKYO (AP)—The U.S. troop presence on Okinawa should not be seen as a burden but as a benefit, a senior Marine Corps general said Friday, despite calls from some Japanese leaders to move a major American base off the crowded southern Japan island.

Lt. Gen. Keith Stalder, commander of the U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific, said the more than 13,000 Marines on Okinawa play a key role in securing the region from threats such as North Korea, and said the presence should continue.

"I'm frequently concerned when I hear the word burden used as a description," Stalder said. "I suggest that it is an obligation under the alliance to do the hosting and basing of U.S. forces. And for that, the government of Japan gets the services of one of the best and biggest militaries in the world."

The U.S. troops on Okinawa—and particularly the future of the sprawling Marine Corps Air Station Futenma—have become a contentious issue between Washington and Tokyo.

Under a post World War II pact, the United States has about 50,000 troops in Japan. Most of the U.S. bases are concentrated on the island of Okinawa, which was a bloody battlefield during the war and was under U.S. jurisdiction until 1972.

To lighten Okinawa's load, both sides have agreed the Futenma base should be closed and about 8,000 Marines shifted to the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam. But Japan's new coalition government is divided over calls that a replacement for Futenma should be located off Okinawa or outside of Japan altogether.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Afghan Taliban chiefs arrested in Pakistani sweeps

KABUL (AP)—Pakistani authorities, aided by U.S. intelligence, have apprehended more Afghan Taliban chiefs following the capture of the movement's No. 2 figure—arrests that together represent the biggest blow to the insurgents since the U.S.-led invasion in 2001. The arrests of more than a dozen Taliban leaders, including known associates of Osama bin Laden, came as militants fought to keep a grip on their southern stronghold of Marjah. Hundreds of militants were holding out against a six-day-old assault by 15,000 U.S., NATO and Afghan troops. Nine Taliban militants linked to al-Qaida were nabbed in three raids late Wednesday and early Thursday near the port city of Karachi, Pakistani intelligence officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity because they weren't supposed to release the information.

Australia threatens Japan over whaling program

SYDNEY (AP)—Australia's prime minister on Friday set a November deadline for Japan to stop its research whaling program that kills hundreds of whales a year in Antarctic waters, or else face legal action. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said Australia would prefer to use diplomatic means to persuade Japan to end its hunt. "If that fails, then we will initiate court action before the commencement of the whaling season in November 2010," he told the Seven Network. "That's the bottom line and we're very clear to the Japanese, that's what we intend to do."

Report: NKorea's chief nuclear envoy to visit US

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—A top North Korean nuclear envoy could visit the United States soon for bilateral talks, a news report said Friday, amid diplomatic efforts to jump-start stalled talks on ending Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program. North Korean envoy Kim Kye Gwan plans to attend a seminar in San Francisco before heading to New York to meet with Washington's lead nuclear negotiator Sung Kim either late this month or next month, the South Korean cable news network YTN reported, citing an unidentified source in Beijing. Kim visited Beijing last week for talks with his Chinese counterpart on resuming the disarmament talks that also involve South Korea, Russia and Japan.

World

Rain and mud pours over Haiti's quake homeless

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—A heavy downpour sent the throngs living beside Haiti's shattered national palace cowering under tarps Thursday as the rush of water made much of the camp of earthquake victims impassable—an ominous foretaste of the rainy season to some.

Amputees struggled to maneuver through mud on crutches and wheelchairs.

Many in the makeshift tent cities housing nearly 600,000 people in Haiti's capital still live without even plastic tarps, which the international community is trying to get to everyone by May 1.

So when the rain comes, bed sheets spread on sticks as protection from the sun quickly get soaked and people move in temporarily with neighbors who have waterproof tents. The lucky actually have beds off the ground.

"It's hard to keep my kids clean. There's too much rain, too much dirt," said Joseph Dukens, 25, at the camp beside the national palace.

He pointed to his baby daughter, who had her leg amputated below her hip. "It's only going to get worse."

The government, aid groups and foreign governments have been wrangling for five weeks over how to house earthquake survivors, but neither the weather nor the people are waiting.

Makeshift camps have hardened into shantytowns, adding a new dimension to the capital's teeming slum life with an extra helping of disease, hunger and misery brought on by the Jan. 12 disaster, which killed more than 200,000 people.

People are in some very dangerous places: at the bottom of hillsides they know will collapse in a heavy rain or near riverbeds that are bound to flood. They are crowded into polluted areas where sanitation is limited and disease is already starting to spread.

UN climate chief quits, leaves talks hanging

AMSTERDAM (AP)—The sharp-tongued U.N. official who shepherded troubled climate talks for nearly four years announced his resignation Thursday, leaving an uncertain path to a new treaty on global warming.

Exhausted and frustrated by unrelenting bickering between rich and poor countries, Yvo de Boer said he will step down July 1 to work in business and academia.

With no obvious successor in sight, fears were voiced that whoever follows will be far less forceful than the skilled former civil servant from the Netherlands.

His departure takes effect five months before 193 nations reconvene in Cancun, Mexico, for another attempt to reach a worldwide legal agreement on controlling greenhouse gas emissions, blamed for the gradual heating of the Earth that scientists predict will worsen weather-related disasters.

The resignation "comes at the worst time in the climate change negotiations," said Agus Purnomo, Indonesia's special presidential assistant on climate change. "His decision will ultimately add to the difficulties we already have in reaching a successful outcome in Mexico Others believed the talks would move ahead unhindered, and could even be a window for shifting course.

Niger soldiers go on state TV to confirm coup

NIAMEY, Niger (AP)—Renegade soldiers in armored vehicles stormed Niger's presidential palace with a hail of gunfire in broad daylight, kidnapping the country's strongman president and then appearing on state television to declare they staged a successful coup.

The soldiers also said Thursday on state TV that the country's constitution had been suspended and all its institutions dissolved. The spokesman for the soldiers said the country is now being led by the Supreme Council for the Restoration of Democracy and asked their countrymen and the international community to have faith in their ideals which "could turn Niger into an example of democracy and of good governance."

Smoke rose from the white-hued multistory palace complex and the echo of machine-gunfire for at least two hours sent frightened residents running for cover, emptying the desert country's downtown boulevards at midday.

Traore Amadou, a local journalist who was in the presidency when the shooting began, said President Mamadou Tandja was kidnapped by mutinous troops.

French radio station Radio France Internationale reported that the soldiers burst in and neutralized the presidential guard before politely escorting Tandja outside to a waiting car which drove him toward a military camp on the outskirts of the capital.

WORLD BRIEFS

US-Cuba immigration talks under cloud of mistrust

HAVANA (AP)—The last time U.S. diplomats traveled to Havana, they held secret talks with their Cuban counterparts that were hailed as the most significant in decades. Almost nothing has gone right for U.S.-Cuba relations in the five long months since. When State Department officials sit down with Cuban leaders for immigration talks Friday, the encounter will take place under a cloud of mutual mistrust and dashed hopes. Last year's hopes that the election of President Barack Obama could mean quicker progress toward ending a half-century of U.S-Cuban enmity now seem a pipe dream. "Expectations on both sides were perhaps too high, and as a result I think there is a lot of disappointment," said Robert Pastor, a longtime foreign policy adviser on hemispheric affairs and professor at American University.

Son of top drug suspect sent to US from Mexico

MEXICO CITY (AP)—A man accused of being an influential, second-generation member of the Sinaloa drug cartel was extradited from Mexico to the United States on Thursday on charges he helped move tons of cocaine from Colombia to California, New York and Chicago. Vicente Zambada Niebla was turned over to U.S. authorities at the international bridge connecting Matamoros to Brownsville, Texas, Mexico's attorney general's office announced. Zambada's father, Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada, controls the cartel along with Mexico's most wanted drug lord, Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, according to law enforcement officials.

Obese woman gives birth in Romania

BUCHAREST, Romania (AP)—A 25-year-old woman weighing 528 pounds (240 kilograms) gave birth to her first baby on Thursday in what one expert called a rare and risky case. "I wanted this child with all my heart, whatever the sacrifice," the Adevarul newspaper quoted the mother, Victoria Lacatus, as saying. Her healthy baby girl, born by cesarean section, weighed 6.4 pounds (2.9 kilograms), said Bogdan Popescu, a spokesman at Bucharest University Emergency Hospital, which is equipped to treat obese people. Dr. Daghni Rasasingham, of Britain's Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists in London, said the case was rare, given the mother's weight and height of 5.25 feet (1.6 meters), and that she would be at risk of clots, diabetes, post-birth bleeding and infection.

Maharlika
PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANA
Saturday, February 20, 2010

Filipino accused of kidnapping Americans nabbed

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine troops arrested a suspected Muslim militant accused in the high-profile kidnappings of three Americans, two of whom were later killed, and dozens of Filipinos nine years ago, the military reported Friday.

It said Jumadali Arad was captured at Manila harbor Thursday as he was about to board a ship bound for the southern Philippines, where the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf group has planted bombs and carried out kidnappings despite U.S.-backed military offensives against the militants.

Arad had been in hiding since 2001, when Abu Sayyaf abducted three American and 17 Filipino tourists from the Dos Palmas resort in southwestern Palawan province at the start of a yearlong kidnapping spree, said marine commandant Maj. Gen. Juancho Sabban.

American missionary Gracia Burnham survived the jungle captivity, but husband Martin was killed in the military rescue in 2002. The third American, Guillermo Sobero, was beheaded by the militants on Basilan Island.

AP

In this photo taken on Feb. 18, 2010 and released by the Philippine Navy, Jumadail Arad, a suspected member of the Muslim militant Abu Sayyaf group, is shown after his arrest.

Arad, who allegedly drove a speedboat loaded with the hostages during the kidnappings, was reportedly on a mission to buy ammunition for Abu Sayyaf commander Isnilon Hapilon when he was arrested Thursday, the military said in a statement. Hapilon has been indicted in the U.S. on kidnapping and murder charges, and Washington offered a $5 million reward for his capture.

The kidnappings and violence prompted Washington to deploy hundreds of troops to the southern Mindanao region, where they have been training Philippine forces and sharing intelligence. U.S. military personnel are not allowed to engage in combat in the Philippines.

Although the government claims to have crippled the Abu Sayyaf after several offensives, the group still poses a major threat. It held three Red Cross workers and several others hostage last year, attacked troops and blew up bridges. A roadside bomb in September killed two U.S. soldiers.

The militants, however, have remained without a central leader following the killings of its top commanders and have split into at least five factions, police said.

3 presidential bets seeking Magdalo nod

By NIKKO DIZON
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

An officer of the Magdalo group of soldiers told the Inquirer the other day that the group may decide by next week which presidential candidate to support. One of the group's leaders is detained Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV.

The Magdalo officer said discussions were going on with the camps of Senators Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III and Manuel Villar. Environmentalist Nicanor Perlas separately said he was also talking with the group.

The Magdalo officer requested anonymity, saying he did not want to preempt any decision the group would make as it was still consulting the members of its grassroots organization called Samahang Magdalo.

"The group is still fine-tuning some things before formally making an announcement," the officer said.

Critical issues

Referring to the Villar and Aquino camps, the officer said: "There are talks (with them) ... There are still critical issues to be discussed."

"Nothing is final yet. There are deal breakers that might come along," he said.

While the source declined to elaborate, the officer said that amnesty for the detained Magdalo soldiers was among the "critical issues" being discussed with the standard-bearers of the Liberal and Nacionalista parties.

300,000 votes

The officer said his group had 55,000 card-bearing members and 350 chapters nationwide and could deliver 300,000 votes to a candidate.

He said Aquino and Villar were seen as "basically even" by Samahang Magdalo members.

"If our criteria is who is potentially the better leader, then he would be the one chosen by our individual members," the officer said. Asked who that would be, the officer said: "Villar."

Pols initiated talks

A Makati court has granted bail to Trillanes, 16 Magdalo soldiers and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim in connection with rebellion charges arising from the 2007 Peninsula Manila takeover during which they called for the resignation of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Trillanes remains detained because of a pending case in a military court in connection with the 2003 Oakwood mutiny.

Lim is also still detained. He faces separate military cases arising from the Peninsula Manila hotel takeover and the 2006 Marine standoff.

The Magdalo soldiers are also still detained for alleged Articles of War violations in connection with the Peninsula takeover.

The Magdalo officer said it was the Villar and Aquino camps that initiated the talks with the group. Last October, the group endorsed Sen. Francis "Chiz" Escudero for president but the latter backed out of the race.

The officer said his group was discussing a new choice for president believing it "should take part on who should be the best leader to steer the country out of its critical state."

Five visits of Villar

An emissary of Aquino on Tuesday visited the group at Camp Crame national police headquarters, where Trillanes and his co-accused are detained, while Villar has visited them at least five times, the officer said.

He said his group was not concerned about rumors that Ms Arroyo was secretly endorsing Villar.

"If 'Villaroyo' is true," the officer said, referring to the tag given Villar by his rivals, "why would the guy (Villar) talk to them (Magdalo group)?"

Teodoro

Teodoro impresses MBC but Arroyo ties hurting him

By ABIGAIL L. HO, JOCELYN UY
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Former Defense Secretary Gilbert "Gibo" Teodoro Thursday outlined an impressive program to reinvigorate the economy and raise incomes, but businessmen said his ties to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo could cost him the presidency in the May election.

Speaking before the Makati Business Club (MBC), Teodoro pledged to work if elected for an 8-percent growth in gross domestic product annually and boost per capita income to $3,200 by 2016 from the current $1,900.

Teodoro also vowed to make the Philippines more business-friendly, simplify tax policies and administration, as well as raise consumption taxes and cut personal and corporate income taxes to bring in more investments and address fiscal woes.

"He was very specific, more specific than the others. He was articulate, as usual. We were also satisfied with the way he answered the questions," said Alberto Lim, MBC executive director.

"Speaking after two other presidentiables, he had to step up. He rose to the challenge," Lim added.

Liberal Party standard-bearer Sen. Benigno Aquino III and Nacionalista Party presidential candidate Sen. Manuel Villar had earlier addressed the MBC.

Aquino was roundly applauded by the organization, many of whose members constituted the "yellow army" of his mother, the late President Corazon Aquino. Villar's reception was lukewarm.

Articulate, clean

Lim said there was no question about Teodoro's intellect and his relatively clean image. However, being the candidate of the administration's Lakas-Kampi-CMD coalition made the business sector wary of him.

"He has ties with the administration. That's why his ratings are so low. He's articulate and clean, but we don't want to have anything to do with Arroyo. If he had run under the (Nationalist People's Coalition), his rating would have even been higher," he said.

"He owes so many people in this administration. Even if he says there will be no special favors, it's difficult because he's not independently rich like Villar. He relies mostly on party funds," he added.

Deficit main concern

Lim said the MBC would conduct another poll of its members regarding their vote for president and vice president in the May elections. Aquino topped the poll in December last year, garnering 61 percent of the votes. Teodoro was second with 14 percent and Villar third with 7 percent.

Former Central Bank Governor Jose Cuisia said that judging from the platforms that Aquino, Villar and Teodoro had presented to the MBC, it was obvious that they all wanted to address the country's deficit.

"The deficit this year is not going to be that much less than in 2009. They have different ways of addressing the fiscal deficit. In the business sector, we just want to make sure that the fiscal deficit is addressed right away," he said.

As for Teodoro's GDP and per capita income targets, Cuisia said these were "doable," with "political will and good governance."

'It's a real pity'

"It is a real pity that he is associated with, based on the survey findings of the Social Weather Stations, the most disliked president in the post-Marcos era," said MBC chair Ramon del Rosario Jr.

Del Rosario also said the MBC was hopeful that Teodoro would address some of their concerns: Whether his association with Ms Arroyo, if he won, would translate to a continuation of current policies.

Teodoro was asked how he would be different from Ms Arroyo and to what extent he would hold her accountable for alleged irregularities.

He said he would review the performance of the Office of the Ombudsman when asked how he would address government impunity.

But in an interview later with reporters, Teodoro said he would just have to live with the group's negative perception of his links with the Arroyo administration.

"They know better than that because I've worked with some of them before, they know that I have the capability of independence," he said. "There are some situations where you just have to accept where you are."

But Teodoro also stressed that even if he did not get the full backing of the MBC, which had been critical of the Arroyo administration, at least he was able to present to them his plans for the country.

MILF: Yes to peace deal now if it's binding on next admin

By RYAN ROSAURO, TJ BURGONIO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—The separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is willing to enter into a peace agreement within what's left of the term of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, as long as it will bind her successor to "a package of obligations."

MILF peace panel chair Mohagher Iqbal Thursday said that on the government's part, the obligations would expectedly include substantive reforms in the legal framework of the state, including amendments to the Constitution.

"We cannot escape constitutional issues because we are dealing with a government," Iqbal told the Inquirer.

But for the agreement to be acceptable to the MILF, it should outline the constitutional changes and the new laws and policies to be institutionalized in order to back the political settlement, he said.

Iqbal cited the peace accord between Indonesia and the Banda Aceh rebels, as well as the Good Friday Agreement that settled the conflict in Northern Ireland.

In each of the cases, the peace agreement became part of the state's legal framework, principally amending the basic charter.

Under the MILF proposal, the obligations will be met by both the separatist group and the government and subjected to independent review and oversight, Iqbal said.

Like Sarawak

He said the conversion of the International Contact Group (ICG) into a monitoring body had been proposed.

The ICG was formed to guarantee the compliance of both camps with any consensus reached during the peace talks. The idea of its inception cropped up in the wake of the aborted signing of the controversial Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain, which led to a fresh outbreak of hostilities.

The Bangsamoro sub-state being proposed by the MILF to address its aspiration for self-governance is "similar to Sarawak," Iqbal said.

Sarawak, the largest of Malaysia's 13 states, was an independent state before it became a British colony in 1946. In 1963, it joined Sabah and the former Crown colonies in Malaya to form the Federation of Malaysia.

Iqbal

Under the terms of federation, according to the Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook, "Sabah and Sarawak retain certain constitutional prerogatives" like the right to maintain their own immigration controls.

Iqbal said the MILF was confident that the next administration would honor a signed peace agreement "as we are dealing here with a government, not a specific [presidential] regime."

But he said any accord would not be final.

Who knows?

"We do not believe in the finality of negotiations for a political solution, but a comprehensive compact that would address as many issues that form the heart of the Moro conflict," he said.

Early this week, the President's adviser on the peace process said the MILF should not discount the possibility of Ms Arroyo pushing for a constitutional amendment that would clear the way for a federal setup in Mindanao.

"The President—since she's leaving, she's on her way out—can't promise [the approval of any MILF proposal that entails Charter change, either in a plebiscite or in Congress]," Annabelle Abaya said in an interview on Feb. 15.

But Abaya said this should not be a reason for the MILF to lose hope: "Who knows where she will be in the next administration? She could still be in a position to push such changes."

In an unprecedented move, Ms Arroyo is seeking to represent the second district in her home province of Pampanga. Her allies predict that she will clinch a seat in the House of Representatives and even get elected as Speaker.

Sub-state

Abaya spoke of Charter change in general terms. But she conceded that the MILF had always pushed for "a Bangsamoro sub-state within the Philippine state."

The next day, Feb. 16, Iqbal confirmed that the MILF was demanding a federal state.

But he complained that the MILF demand was not mentioned by the government in its own draft agreement.

The complaint threatens to derail the resumption of formal negotiations to hammer out a final peace agreement before the end of Ms Arroyo's term in June.

Open to Cha-cha

Abaya said the government was open to discussing the MILF's proposed changes to the Constitution.

"It's not that we're saying that these changes should not happen, or that we're rejecting them. We're saying, 'Let's discuss it.' It's got to be a joint action in the sense that we will have to campaign for it," she said, adding:

"What we'd like to see is the MILF [looking] at this process collaboratively."

Abaya said the idea of a federal state would require long discussions.

"Are they asking for a federalist type of government? Are they asking for a special administrative region, ... an autonomous region like Scotland, [or] … a Marianas type of relationship? That's not clear yet. So we have a lot to discuss," she said.

In its draft agreement, the government proposed "enhanced autonomy" for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

"It's necessary to set up a technical working group with various experts from different sectors—the economy, labor, perhaps agrarian reform, land, maybe finance—in order to be able to detail how to execute [this proposal]," Abaya said.

Prospects 'not good'

But the MILF said the proposal was a rehash of old agreements, and declared that the "prospects for an agreement" were "not good."

Still, Ricardo Saludo, a spokesperson of Ms Arroyo, dismissed speculation that the peace talks had again reached an impasse.

"The main thing is that we have a ceasefire that is holding, there's continuing communication [between the two camps], and the international community is 110-percent behind both sides," he said.

Cops rescue 83-year-old kidnap victim; 4 suspects arrested, face raps

By NANCY C. CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—More than an hour after she was reported kidnapped Thursday, an 83-year-old woman was rescued by the police after her captors took her back to her house in Quezon City to loot it.

Chief Insp. Benjamin Elenzano of the Quezon City Police District's homicide investigation section said they also arrested Lucila Manucduc's abductors.

He identified them as Myra Dizon, 39; Arlene Camo, 46; Maricar Cinco, 38, and Rafael Ablas, 48.

Charges of abduction with robbery will be filed against them, he added.

According to Elenzano, the group usually preys on unaccompanied elderly and rich-looking women.

Manucduc told the Inquirer that she left her house Thursday morning to buy fruits from a nearby market.

She said that at around 8:30 a.m., she was on her way home "when two women approached me and offered to bring me home because I was alone and walking slowly."

Manucduc added that she accepted the women's offer and got into their van—a gray Hyundai with plate number XDT 420—which was parked on Mabilis Street, Barangay Pinyahan, Quezon City.

A neighbor, however, saw her getting into the vehicle and reported the incident to the victim's children who lived just a few blocks away.

Alarmed, her children called the police which promptly sent several patrol cars to look for the van.

More than an hour later, the kidnappers' van drove in front of the victim's house and into the arms of the police.

Manucduc said that after she got into the van, the women who had talked to her, along with another woman and Ablas who was driving the van, started asking her about the jewelry and money she kept in her house.

This went on for about an hour, she said, while Ablas drove around with no apparent destination in mind.

Manucduc added that her captors also divested her of the jewelry she was wearing.

Later on, they told her that they were taking her back to her house.

"They said they would let me go but I have to get all my jewelry and place it in a plastic bag and no one should know about it," she said.

The victim added that although she was not harmed by her captors, the experience shook her.

She said that the group even had the gall, after their arrest, to offer her P100,000 in exchange for her telling the police that they did not kidnap her.

Philippines, WWF offer reward for shark killers

AP

Filipino Greenpeace protesters wear mask of two Japanese anti-whaling activist arrested in Japan in 2008 as they display cut-out models of whale tail fins during a protest Friday, Feb. 12, 2010, in front of the Japanese Embassy in suburban Pasay City south of Manila, Philippines.

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A conservation group and the Philippine government are offering a reward for information about those responsible for the killing of an 18-foot (5 1/2-meter) whale shark.

The World Wildlife Fund says the whale shark — the world's biggest fish species—was found early this week in a cove south of Manila with its fins sliced off and rope and knife marks on its tail.

The Bureau of Fisheries and WWF on Friday offered a 100,000 peso ($2,170) reward for information leading to the culprits' arrest. Whale sharks are considered protected since 1998 with a maximum penalty of four years in jail for poachers.

Whale sharks have been hunted for decades and 2.2 pounds (a kilogram) of dried fins can fetch up to $800.

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Power crisis perils polls

By JULIE ALIPALA, AMY R. REMO, PHILIP TUBEZA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Mindanao is suffering from a serious power shortage as a result of a dry spell, raising fears that the shortfall could imperil the conduct of automated elections on the island.

The island accounts for 12 million or about a fourth of the country's 50 million registered voters.

Since Wednesday, National Grid Corp. of the Philippines (NGCP) has placed Mindanao under red alert because the power situation on the island continued to worsen. A red alert status means that the grid has no reserves.

The Mindanao grid recorded a power supply deficit of 218 megawatts (MW) two days ago, prompting authorities to implement two-hour rotating brownouts.

As of Thursday, the Visayas grid recorded a shortfall of 81 MW, while the Luzon grid enjoyed a reserve of 832 MW.

On the sidelines of a power stakeholders' meeting in Zamboanga City, Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes said the power shortage was so serious that Mindanao's rotating brownouts could be increased to four hours a day.

About 52 percent of Mindanao's power supply comes from hydroelectric plants [whose turbines are run by water], making the country's second largest island particularly vulnerable to a prolonged dry season.

For the past months, the dry spell has dramatically cut the capability of its hydropower sources to generate electricity, said NGCP, which transmits high-voltage power from generators to distributors.

"Contingency reserve is zero due to generation deficiency caused by reduced capabilities from two hydropower plants—the Agus Hydro with 50-percent reduction and the Pulangi plant with 75-percent reduction," NGCP said.

The Mindanao grid has been on red alert since last month, although on some days—Sundays in particular—the alert status is lifted, said Carlito Claudio, NGCP vice president for operations.

Batteries on standby

NGCP has warned of a possible power supply shortage in Mindanao during the elections. Claudio said the Mindanao grid might experience a 144-MW deficit in May.

At a hearing in the House of Representatives, Claudio said that on Election Day, Mindanao would have a "small shortage of four megawatts but this can be offset if we are able to tap several generators in the grid."

The country will hold its first automated general elections on May 10. Precinct Count Optical Scan (PCOS) machines will be used nationwide for the casting of ballots and the counting of votes.

Embedded generators

In case of a power outage, a PCOS machine can use its batteries, according to the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

Pio Benavidez, National Power Corp. (Napocor) senior vice president, said Reyes was already talking with owners of "embedded generators" that could provide up to 50 MW of additional electricity on May 10.

Embedded generators are privately owned generators like those in malls and electric cooperatives.

Benavidez said at the hearing the "mothballed" Iligan diesel power plant could also be used to provide an additional 30 MW on Election Day.

"If the four megawatts can be supplied, we will have no power problem on Election Day," Claudio said.

An opposition lawmaker warned that Mindanao's votes might not be counted on Election Day because of the power crisis.

Failure of elections

"There can be failure of elections in Mindanao which will result in 12 million votes being lost out of the 50 million votes (nationwide.) Then, we will have a problem if this will not be solved," Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez Thursday said at a House energy committee hearing.

Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez asked for the breakdown of the power shortfall at the provincial level but no one among the invited guests could provide it.

"One province can decide the outcome of these elections especially if that province will experience power failure," Golez said.

Emergency powers

Rodriguez said Congress should give President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo emergency powers to address the problem.

He suggested that Congress hold an emergency session and grant Ms Arroyo emergency powers under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (EPIRA) to allow Napocor to negotiate with private groups to supply energy to Mindanao.

Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo, chair of the energy committee and son of the President, was cool to the idea of granting his mother emergency powers.

"For now, I believe that what is important there is no fear of any supply shortage in Luzon and the Visayas. The only issue is Mindanao and the Department of Energy is doing something about it," Arroyo said.

Consultations

In Zamboanga City, Reyes said the power supply shortfall in Mindanao was "not acceptable because it will not just affect the residences but commerce and industries as well."

Reyes said the worsening power situation in the country was the reason he was been holding consultations.

He said one proposal being pushed was the implementation of Section 71 of the EPIRA, which allows Napocor "to generate, operate and lease power to consumers other than allowing private firms to operate."

Reyes said another proposal was to encourage more companies to put up power plants. "But with the low tariff rate in Mindanao, private firms are having second thoughts in investing here," he said.

Claudio expressed optimism that the power supply in the Visayas would stabilize over the next few months.

New plants in Visayas

He said two units of the coal-fired power plant of Cebu Energy Development Corp. would begin commercial operations in the first half of the year.

The first unit, which has an 82-MW capacity, will start operating next month. Also in the pipeline is the 200-MW Kepco-Salcon power plant in Naga City, Cebu.

These power plants are expected to boost the power supply in the Cebu-Negros-Panay grid.

Claudio added that the Luzon grid might be able to supply part of the electricity requirements of the Visayas grid.

Power supply in Luzon has stabilized with the operation of 540-MW Limay combined cycle power plant in Bataan. By May, most of the power facilities in Luzon would have completed their maintenance repairs.

TAKE CHARGE

Zero percent interest promos: Are they a good deal?

Question: My husband and I are excited to move in to our own place this summer. We will just be renting a townhouse, but we have all these ideas on how to furnish and decorate our unit. We need to buy a lot of appliances and furniture, and to us, the zero percent interest promotion offered by our credit card looks really look good. But I wonder - is it really a better deal?—Leah

Answer: Congratulations, Leah, on this new exciting chapter in your life! It is indeed exciting to move in to a new home and we have no doubt you and your husband have many fresh ideas on how your townhouse unit will be decorated.

Moving to a new house do come with many expenses—aside from the deposit for rental and advance rental fee, there are utilities to take care of, fees for the movers, and yes, furniture and appliances.

Thanks to credit cards, you can buy all the appliances you need—now—even if you don't have enough cash. And even if you do have the cash, no need to carry all that with you—just present the credit card, swipe, and you can go home with all the furniture and appliances you need, as well as want—whether it's a new air conditioner for your bedroom, a new dining set, a new sofa, even a new TV and microwave oven altogether.

With your credit card, you may choose to pay in full, when the next bill arrives, or arrange to do so in installments from terms as short as 3 months to as long as 24 months. An interest charge is usually added to your bill if you pay in installments, and this fee could range from 1% to 3% add-on per month. We suggest you check with your credit card issuer to verify.

So when you see a 0% offer, it does seem like a deal too good to be true. Citibank credit cards regularly offer 0% installment packages for a wide range of purchases—not just appliances or furniture, but even for gym membership fees, health and wellness treatments, jewelries, watches as well as clothes.

Before you take advantage, study the details of the offer. Is the 0% payment term only for three months? Will you be able to pay within this time? If not, it may be best to sign up for a longer term at low rates so you can better manage your payments.

For those who have the cash ready, charging to your credit card is a good way to hang on to your money a little longer, and earn loyalty points as well if your credit card company offers a rewards program.

Speaking of rewards, Citibank has an ongoing partnership with a number of stores including home and appliance stores which allows cardholders to use their earned points as payment for their purchase (up to as much as 50 percent of the tag price). If you are spending on a budget, this should help lower the cost of your total purchase.

To guide you on your new life together as you go hunting for new furniture and appliances for your home, here are some tips you may find useful:

1.Before buying a big-ticket item, discuss the matter first with your spouse. Since you're going to live with what you will end up buying, agree on the item you want to have at home—should it be a no-frost refrigerator, for instance, or a regular one? A queen-size bed or a king-sized one? A 1-horsepower air conditioner or a 1.5-horsepower unit? The worst thing to do is to buy an item ahead and surprise your spouse; some spouses would resent not being consulted and balk at having to pay for a surprise item.

2.Canvas among several stores to find the best deal. Go to at least three stores and see which one offers the best price. Ask also about delivery and installation fees.

3.Check if the manufacturer offers after-sales support. Make sure to fill out a warranty card and promptly mail it to the manufacturer. Keep a list of accredited service centers so you can easily bring the unit for repair if needed.

4.Keep your receipts, charge slips, warranty cards and operating manuals on file. If you need to have the unit repaired and it's under warranty, you have to show the receipt to the service center. And of course, refer to the operating manual for immediate troubleshooting at home.

5.Keep your furniture and appliances in good condition. Follow the manufacturer's guide on when and how to clean and maintain the item. This will prolong the life of your furniture or appliance.

Happy nesting!

MISS PHILIPPINES AP

Miss Philippines contestants pose at the poolside of a plush hotel in Manila, Philippines on Thursday Feb. 18, 2010. Twenty four candidates from all over the country will vie for Miss Philippines and the chance to represent the nation in international beauty pageants.

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Aquino to add star power to campaign

AP

Presidential candidate for the May 10, 2010 national elections Sen. Benigno Aquino III shows his answer to a question from a panel of foreign correspondents during a forum with Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines, FOCAP, at a hotel at Manila's financial district of Makati city Monday Feb. 15, 2010 in the Philippines.

By GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

DAVAO CITY, Philippines—Television host Kris Aquino and other showbiz endorsers of Liberal Party presidential candidate Senator Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III are expected to hit the campaign trail next month to add star power whenever he goes on the stump.

This was revealed by Aquino, who is also seeking a private meeting with religious leaders such as Bro. Mike Velarde of the El Shaddai group and Pastor Apollo Quiboloy of the Davao-based Kingdom of Jesus Christ (KJC) in the next few weeks to further consolidate his lead before election day.

In an interview with reporters in Davao City, Aquino said he expected Kris to join his nationwide campaign starting March 26, when the campaign for provincial, city and municipal positions start.

"I don't think she will be with us all the time. She and Boy Abunda were part of the group that made the story board for my ads. This group is self-funded," said Aquino, who expected Kris' husband, basketball star James Yap, to tag along in the campaign.

Aquino said that other stars would jump on his campaign wagon starting next month, including possibly actress Sharon Cuneta.

"She has declared it (joining his campaign) several times in public," said Aquino.

Aside from the entertainment world, Aquino was also keen on getting support from the religious world.

"We are talking to all groups because we hope to include them in our movement for a new nation. We are keeping our communication lines open and if they have any issues against, we will explain," said Aquino.

Aquino said he has yet to talk to Velarde, who endorsed his senatorial bid in 2007.

Aquino is set to meet with Quiboloy in Davao next month and attend KJC's worship service.

Aquino has already met with Iglesia ni Cristo leaders and he expects to meet with them again soon.

"I think they received us very graciously. Whether or not we earned their support is another matter. I have no complaint, I am very grateful we were given a large amount of time," said Aquino, who also planned to meet with Muslim leaders in the next few weeks.

But his main target remains the dominant Catholic group in the country.

"I make it a point to meet the bishop in the provinces I visit," said Aquino said.

Juday gives it back to Jamby: Regrets

By BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Seems the feeling is mutual.

Actress Judy Ann Santos told the media during a press conference that she also regretted endorsing presidential aspirant Jamby Madrigal, who ran for a Senate seat in 2004 and won.

During the Inquirer-sponsored presidential debate held on Feb. 8, Madrigal said she regretted getting Santos to campaign for her at the time: "I have seen the folly of my ways and I will not repeat that because I don't believe that we should perpetuate lies [with the help of] a thick budget."

Santos said, "It's good that it came from her because we feel exactly the same way."

The actress said she got upset when she heard about the politician's comments. "I thought she was sincere... I thought she believed that I was an effective endorser, that I was able to convince at least three people to vote for her everywhere we went."

Santos is among the top 10 celebrity endorsers in the country, pitching for products as diverse as shampoo (Pantene), mobile phone service (Sun) and feminine wash (Lactacyd, which was launched Monday).

She took offense at the insinuation that stars endorse politicians

Santos

for nothing more, or less, than a hefty talent fee.

As for the rumor that Madrigal failed to compensate her properly for the 2004 campaign, Santos just shrugged: "I'd rather not comment on that. When it comes to money matters, it's best to talk to my manager, Alfie Lorenzo," she told the Inquirer in a one-on-one.

She said she learned a lot from this controversy. "I am more picky now... before campaigning for anyone, I'll make sure I know that person really well... from head to foot."

She said she first met Madrigal just before the 2004 election. "We did an infomercial on the youth. Since she was running [with] the party of Tatay Ron (Fernando Poe Jr.), I also campaigned for her."

She is not interested in waging a word war with Madrigal, though. "I value my name and reputation in the business," Juday said, adding that she has yet to hear from Madrigal after Feb. 8. "I have no idea if she is trying to reach me, but if she wants to... who am I to turn my back on her?"

Asked if she is endorsing a candidate this election, Juday said, "I'd rather keep that to myself or discuss it only among friends. Or maybe if I'm in the grocery and someone asks who I'd vote for, I'll be open about it. But I'd rather not campaign openly."

Her requirements? "I will vote for someone who will help the country progress, someone who can solve simple problems, like traffic."

She said that the Comelec ruling enjoining celebrities and media personalities to go on leave if they want to campaign was "slightly" unfair.

"Why single out actors? We also have the right to express our opinions and support whomever we want."

Big challenge in Gabby, KC movie

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Gabby Concepcion is ecstative about working with his daughter KC Concepcion in their first movie together, "I'll Be There For You."

What was the hardest scene they did together? "Reactions required for the scenes when we see each other for the first time were the opposite of what happened in real life," Gabby said.

"Super saya kami pareho! Pero kabaligtaran ang nangyari sa movie. Mahirap umarte nang malungkot kung masaya kayo. That was a big challenge sa eksena."

What's one particular moment he will never forget when his "mini me" KC was there for him?

"When dad died, she was one of the first who came to the wake."

I happened to be there when KC arrived at the chapel. It was such a touching moment to witness them embrace so tightly without saying a word. The gorgeous father and daughter will forever be in each other's corners.

Gabby Concepcion

KC Concepcion

Are Mylene Dizon and guitarist Ira Cruz back together? I chanced upon them at Belo's Clinic in Greenhills together having a facial. Perhaps they were just hanging out as lovers-turned-friends. Or does their facial come not just with a clearer face but also a new phase in their whatchamacallit relationship?

I immensely enjoyed being at Nestea Fit's Camp Hot. It was a "Disneyland" for sports buffs with touch football, beach basketball, hip-hop, ultimate frisbee, beach volleyball and yoga lessons, all for free. Derek Ramsay, Joem Bascon and Karylle joined the fun.

Check out the Camp every Saturday (9 a.m. - 5 p.m.) and its celebrity guests at the Fort Open Grounds until March 27. Winning teams will fly to Boracay for free.

Derek was limping because he's still recovering from his knee operation. "I got to take it slow for a few weeks," he says. "It's quite an ordeal for someone like me who's so active. My body always wants action."

He is looking forward to a trip to Africa with his GF, Angelica Panganiban, and their friends to watch the FIFA World Cup.

"Angelica doesn't understand football completely but in time I'll teach her about it," he says. "I just tell her to watch if the ball has moved to the other side of the field. We will watch one or two games only. Sobrang mahal kasi ang tickets (laughs)."

But the joy they have is priceless.

Karylle and I kept ribbing each other about Valentine's. "Di ako maka relate sa V-day" she says, laughing, "Kaya nail polish and cell phone case ko na lang ang color red so I'll get the feel of it somehow."

K was asking me to join her shoot some balls. I told her that I wasn't into basketball, only into cagers. She teased me, "You should try to have a singer for a BF."

We both giggled like crazy when we agreed that, when it comes to lovers, we should only have one of each kind.

I asked Diether Ocampo about the real state of his relationship with Rima Ostwani. "As long as she's happy," he quips, "I'm happy." In every relationship, if we can no longer be happy together, the least we could do is be happy for each other.

Dingdong Dantes sent me this text regarding his sentiments about the Comelec's order for celebs who campaign for candidates to go on leave:

"The Comelec rule prevents artists from participating responsibly in a very important political exercise. It even deprives some artists the chance to earn extra income only because they are working in a candidate's campaign. Worse, it forces many artists like me who are volunteering (to support their candidates), even shouldering our own expenses, to choose between making a decent living and making a difference in a supposedly democratic exercise.

"I appeal to the sense of reason of the Comelec and the Supreme Court to clarify the present issue and what I perceive as a flaw in the law. I request legal luminaries to guide us. Most of all, I call on my friends and fellow workers in the industry to make our common stand."

There you have it. The Do's and Don'ts of Dong!

Maharlika – Opinyon

Class war

In the last week of January, surveys put the undecided voters at between 2 percent (Social Weather Stations), 5 percent (Manila Standard) and 6 percent (Pulse Asia). There are 50,723,734 registered voters for the May elections. The Commission on Elections expect an 80 percent turnout, or 40.5 million.

Historically Philippine national elections attract a relatively high participation rate of between 70 and 80 percent, compared to that of stable and older Western democracies, at a rate less than 60 percent. From this view, a high level of electoral election participation is an erroneous test of the stability of pluralist democracies that hold regular elections as an instrument of social and political renewal.

The above figures are being used by this paper to focus on, and illustrate, the issue that the portion of undecided voters indicates the social battleground on which the leading presidential candidates (notably Senators Benigno Aquino III and Manuel Villar) would fight to win over the undecided in the next months.

Classified according to income classes, 10 percent of the 40.5 million voters, belong to ABC classes, (the rich and upper middle class, the intelligentsia); 75 percent to the D class (lower middle class and the poor; and 15 percent to Class E, the poorest). The strategy of the leading contenders, especially Aquino and Villar, who were in a dead heat in the Pulse Asia survey, with 37 percent of respondents voting for Aquino and 35 percent for Villar, has been determined by what socioeconomic classes they were targeting in their campaigns. The two percentage points separating them pinpoints the area where they would be fighting tooth and nail, for at stake in this competition is 811,000 votes, representing the number of votes involved in the 2 percent lead of Aquino over Villar.

Analysis
By AMANDO DORONILA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

This indicates how closely fought the election race has become. The 811,000 votes are not a pittance. This explains why Aquino has drastically changed his campaign style and has become more aggressive and combative, to put Villar on the defensive. He is fighting to stop Villar from wiping his precariously narrow margin.

In the survey, Aquino led Villar 37-22 in the ABC Class and 40-34 in Class D, while Villar led 39-31 in Class D, which makes up 75 percent of the 40.5 million voters. These class statistics help explain why Villar has been flooding mass media, especially TV, with political ads addressed to the popular noon time TV shows—like "Eat Bulaga" and "Wowowee"—patronized by the poor. This is the class war that is taking place, in the homes of the poor.

Last Wednesday, Villar invaded the bastion of the Makati big business establishments, when he appeared at the Makati Business Club election forum to inform them of his policy platform, which has remained hazy up to this time. He knew he was in hostile territory, but he also needs them although businessmen have fewer votes than the masa of Class E. He has learned from Joseph Estrada that the MBC was one of the strategic groups, including the army and the Catholic Church hierarchy, that withdrew support from him in Edsa 2 in 2001.

Though a billionaire, Villar is a nouveau riche and is not comfortable in the company of the old-money families dominating the MBC. He said he was happy to appear at the club "because I know I am not popular with the MBC, but I wanted to come here so that they will hear my views and see what I plan to do for our country. The business sector is important in … alleviating poverty." He pitched this pro-poor line in an effort to disarm the MBC members.

A survey conducted from Dec. 8 to 18 in 2009, among 800 members, revealed that 61 percent would vote for Aquino. Villar received only 7 percent, lower than former Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro's 14 percent.

He said, "Given my background, my humble beginnings… I think it would be useful not to dwell on what makes us so different, but to point out what we have in common." He likened the election of a president to the selection of a business chief executive officer, who is a "true leader," taking into consideration the interests of all the company's stakeholders. "Our country has too many complex problems and too many competing interests it will need a strong leader with a proven track record to even have a chance." This was a swipe at Aquino, who has been criticized for lack of executive experience.

He promised a "strong and honest government," if elected.

When Villar was asked about the C-5 road extension project, some observers said he answered the question "reasonably well," but some said he failed to explain why and how he got embroiled in the controversy.

Villar also said he could not promise not to impose new taxes, unlike Aquino who told the MBC last month that he would not impose new taxes or increase tax rates if elected president. MBC executive director Alberto Lim said Villar made an "excellent delivery" of his platform, but gave "superficial treatment" to difficult issues.

"He was very impressive, but I don't think he changed people's mind," Lim said.

Peter Wallace, publisher of a business publication, had a different opinion. "I think there may be a significant shift in the MBC's mindset," he said, "as well as a shift in the thinking of the individual members after his presentation today."

The MBC will conduct another survey before the election. "We'll see if there have been changes since our last survey in December," Lim said.

EDITORIAL

A dangerous idea

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile has a well-deserved reputation for legal acumen, but it is a reputation shadowed by a history of political ambition. His absurd and dangerous idea, first floated last September and then repeated the other day, that in case of a massive failure of elections later this year the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police can intervene and choose an acting head of government, is classic: it is, at one and the same time, patently unconstitutional and incredibly self-indulgent.

"Walang Presidente, walang Bise Presidente at walang Senate President, there is no one who will take over… Para hindi magkagulo, kailangang mag-take over ang military at pumili ng OIC [officer in charge] na mangangasiwa ng bansa pansamantala," Enrile told ABS-CBN. His second sentence is clear enough even non-Filipino speakers can understand it: to prevent chaos, the military must take over and choose an OIC to govern the country temporarily.

He used a new provision in the Constitution (new, that is, in our constitutional history) to argue his position. Article II, Section 3 explicitly describes the Armed Forces as the "protector of the people and the State."

Last September he included the Philippine National Police, as another of the state's "institutions of legitimate violence," in the caretaker role. "The Constitution is just a piece of document and if it is not enforced, nothing will happen," he said then. "Who will enforce the Constitution? It is the police and the military if there is no civilian authority that can enforce it, that can issue the command."

This is all wrong, and runs directly counter to the spirit of the Constitution Enrile says he wants to see enforced. In the first place, his fixation with a military solution to a potential political crisis reflects his own background: an eminent lawyer who served as Ferdinand Marcos' martial law administrator, a powerful defense minister who encouraged the formation of a corps of military rebels in the depths of martial rule, an astute politician who masterminded a (failed) military coup against Marcos that was redeemed only by the first emergence of people power.

Secondly, Enrile is giving short shrift to the Constitution. The "protector of the people" provision was written into the post-Marcos Constitution precisely to prevent another military-backed dictatorship, not to provide the armed services with a back door through which they can enter the corridors of Malacañang. Indeed, the "protector of the people" provision comes only after the framers of the 1987 Constitution reiterated one of the fundamental principles of a genuine democracy: to wit, that civilian authority should at all times be supreme over the military. There is nothing in the Constitution, absolutely nothing, that empowers the AFP and the PNP to, as Enrile said last September, choose among themselves or from any institution "the one to run the country."

Thirdly, Enrile pretends to see impossibilities where there are, at worst, only difficulties. "Imagine if you have no election, you have no president, no vice president, no Senate. The 12 senators cannot function. In fact there are only 11, one of them cannot vote. He is in judicial custody. There are only 11. They cannot function," he said last year. (The 12th senator, of course, is Magdalo ringleader Antonio Trillanes IV.) We agree; they cannot function—if they wait until after June 30 to elect a Senate president who can serve as acting president in case of a general failure of elections. But why wait till then? The 14th Congress still has one more session left, in May. Why pretend that that possibility, of electing a new Senate president in May, does not exist?

Lastly, Enrile himself holds the key to the crisis he says we should avoid at all costs. Last September he could have offered to give up the Senate presidency, which he says he did not seek and does not need. The other day he could have offered to return to the Senate in May with the avowed intention to exercise his leadership in that chamber—the leadership that is the subject of his "Gusto Ko Happy Ka" (I want you to be happy) re-election campaign ads—to persuade his colleagues to elect a new Senate president before chaos erupts. Why didn't he say so then? And why doesn't he do so now?

It can only be self-indulgence. And that doesn't make any of us happy.

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Magsaysay and the busted spark plugs

Edward Geary Lansdale is a fascinating character in Philippine history. His work is the stuff of legend and he left us with a wonderful memoir, "In the Midst of Wars: America's Mission to Southeast Asia" (New York, 1972), filled with amusing anecdotes that soften and obscure the more violent side of his career. To neutralize the Huks in the 1950s Lansdale and Col. Napoleon Valeriano set up the Nenita Brigade, which carried out extra-judicial killings, with the end made to justify the means.

A friend texted to comment on the anecdote I shared last Wednesday regarding Lansdale's use of Philippine folklore, in this case the aswang, in counter-insurgency. She said that the Philippine aswang doesn't leave two holes on the neck, Western Vampire-style. Our aswang, she reminded me, come armed with long pointed tongues that puncture the victims and work like a straw to suck out not just blood and viscera but their favorite, unborn babies, as well.

Looking Back
By AMBETH OCAMPO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

These tongues were useful when people still lived in houses with thatch roof and bamboo-slat flooring. GI sheets and concrete drove the aswang to extinction. The poor things cannot even fly in an urban environment without getting caught in TV antennas and illegal cable and electric connections.

The text exchange on the aswang made me realize that Lansdale's amusing anecdote makes us forget the poor Huk who was sacrificed for this now not-so-amusing bit of psywar.

Lansdale had many nicknames in Manila: "Bigote" (because he had a moustache), "Eagle" (because of his initials "EGL"), and, following Magsaysay's victory in the 1953 presidential elections, "Lanslide."

It is said that Lansdale was the inspiration for the main character in Graham Greene's 1955 novel "The Quiet American" which was made into a film of the same title in 1958 and re-made in 2002. Lansdale also inspired the 1958 best-selling novel "The Ugly American" by Eugene Burdick and William Lederer. One can only conclude that history is indeed written by the victors.

It is hoped that those who went through and survived the Huk rebellion of the 1950s will put pen to paper and complete our picture of that chapter of our history. So far the only other book available on the topic was written by yet another American, Joseph Burkholder Smith, who published "Portrait of a Cold Warrior: Second Thoughts of a Top CIA Agent" (1981).

Lansdale's book is quite hard to find. I am fortunate to have an autographed copy, inscribed to the late interior decorator Wili Fernandez who in his youth drew some advertising copy for Lansdale. The chapters on Magsaysay and the elections are quite relevant these days when we face a handful of individuals who want to become president. As promised I will write a series of columns on elections in Philippine history, but today I want to share something relevant to the news that Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim and Navy Lt. Antonio Trillanes were granted bail by the courts but will remain imprisoned because their crimes in civil courts may be bailable but there is no such thing in military courts martial.

If I remember right, one of the issues raised by the Oakwood mutineers was that some unscrupulous people in the military and defense department were buying substandard materials and supplies and, worse, selling arms and ammunition to the enemy! If this is true, not much seems to have changed in the past half-century. Lansdale wrote:

"Two evils practiced by the Huks were curbed to some extent by technical means. One was the nasty habit they had of throwing hand grenades from ambush onto jeeps carrying wounded soldiers. The other evil was the Huk practice of buying ammunition from corrupt suppliers on the government side. I took up the problems with the Philippine Army's intelligence and research chiefs. Once we found the Huk's clandestine channel of supply, I asked them if contaminated ammunition could be made and inserted into the stocks being delivered secretly to the Huks. They agreed. After weeks of work by the two chiefs, wounded soldiers started reporting that they had heard grenades going off in roadside ambush positions—exploding right in the hands of Huk ambushers. Incidents of attacks on the wounded declined sharply. Meanwhile, government combat troops reported a curious new phenomenon on the battlefield. Huk rifle barrels were exploding from the use of faulty ammunition. It came as small surprise that the illicit sale of ammunitions to the Huks ground to a halt. Dirty tricks beget dirty tricks."

Lansdale also recounted that at one time a tank stopped and failed to support the infantry fighting the Huks. Magsaysay opened the engine and, using skills he learned as a mechanic, found the problem: busted spark plugs. The tank was brand new, someone had exchanged the new spark plugs for old ones and made money. Magsaysay swore a lot and had the chief of ordnance placed under house arrest pending an investigation.

Is history repeating itself here? Not really; it is we who keep repeating it.

Maharlika – Samu't Sari

GENERAL VISIT CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Major General Donald Goldhorn from Head Quarters GUARNG Guam visited Kagman High School. This was a rare visit by a two star general. The general came to KHS to see JROTC cadets and congratulated SFC Lukeala and MSG Burke with a Two Star General Coin of Excellence for making young people better citizens for their community and country. This was an honor and a first time that any general has ever visited a JROTC Public School in the CNMI.

AS LITO BIRTHDAY CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Belated happy birthday to Joseph Domingo who celebrated his birthday last Sunday Feb. 14 at his residence in As Lito. Greetings coming from his family, relatives, and friends. From left, Jo, Jose, Sam, Art, Mel, celebrant, Danny, and Marvin

HAPPY BIRTHDAY GRANDPA

Belated happy birthday to Grandpa Rudy. Greetings from Allen, Chen-chen, Kastel, and Cristy and Erwin.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

ADVANCE BIRTHDAY

Advance happy birthday to Kastell. Hope you achieve all your dreams. Greetings from Mommy, Daddy, Chen-chen, and Allen.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

HAPPY BIRTHDAY UNCLE

Belated happy birthday to Uncle Eric. Greetings from Allen, Chen-chen, Kastel, and Cristy and Erwin.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

OPEN HOUSE CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The ASNMC president Miles Rodriguez and a couple of students from the Northern Marianas College show off a creative poster board designed for the Student Support Services Open House held on Thursday. The SSS Open House was an all-day event.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Belated birthday greetings to Jun S. Lapeceros who celebrated his birthday last Feb. 14, in As Lito. Greetings coming from relatives and friends. From left, the celebrant, Lou and Bobby. Sitting, Lorna, Minda, and Tony.

NMC MEETING CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Board of Regents personnel committee, chaired by regent Andrew Orsini, met Thursday with the representatives of the college governing bodies for the proposed revision of personnel policy and regulations.

Young Style

George Washington didn't grow up wanting to be president

By MOIRA E. MCLAUGHLIN
(C) 2010, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON — It's hard to imagine U.S. presidents ever being kids, but they all were once, just like you! They had to deal with their brothers and sisters. They had to do what their parents told them. They had big dreams, even though they were small.

Take first president George Washington. He was born Feb. 22, 1732, and grew up around Fredericksburg, Va., at a place called Ferry Farm.

One famous story about the future president states that 6-year-old George had a new hatchet, or ax. He wanted to try it out and so chopped a cherry tree on his dad's farm. His dad was very angry when he saw his favorite tree dead. He asked George who killed it.

"I can't tell a lie, Pa," George said. "You know I can't tell a lie. I did cut it with my hatchet."

It's a great story about the importance of honesty, but it's probably not true and was made up by a writer after Washington died.

What is true is that George was a middle child. He had three older half-siblings and five younger siblings. His dad died when he was 11 years old, and his mother never remarried. He was close to his older half-brother Lawrence.

George didn't go to England for school like his older half-brothers. He never studied Greek or Latin as many boys did in his time, and his schooling ended when he was about 15. Many historians believe that may have made George feel a little self-conscious. Maybe that's why he copied a book on manners as a boy and was always a proper young man.

George liked to ride horses, fence, play cards and dance. His favorite subject was math; he was a writer, too, and started keeping a journal when he was 16. An active boy with red hair, George grew up on the Rappahannock River and liked to see how far he could throw stones into the water. A cousin claimed that George could throw a stone all the way across the river. (One myth says that George could throw a silver dollar across the Potomac, but that's impossible. The Potomac is more than a mile wide where he lived, so George would have had a hard time throwing anything so far! Plus there were no silver dollars when he was a kid.)

One thing is for certain: Young George Washington never dreamed of growing up to be president of the United States the way some kids do today. That's because there was no president — no United States even — when George was a boy!

A museum worker puts the finishing touches on a wax statue of George Washington at age 19 later displayed at the Mount Vernon historic estate in Alexandria, Va. Washington worked as a surveyor as a young man.
THE WASHINGTON POST

US PRESIDENT FACT

(c) 2010, The Washington Post

Feb. 15 is Presidents' Day, a federal holiday to celebrate the births of George Washington (Feb. 22) and Abraham Lincoln (Feb. 12). But October is presidents' month. More presidents (six) were born in October than any other month.

First Lady: Let's get moving!

By Margaret Webb Pressler
(C) 2010, THE WASHINGTON POST

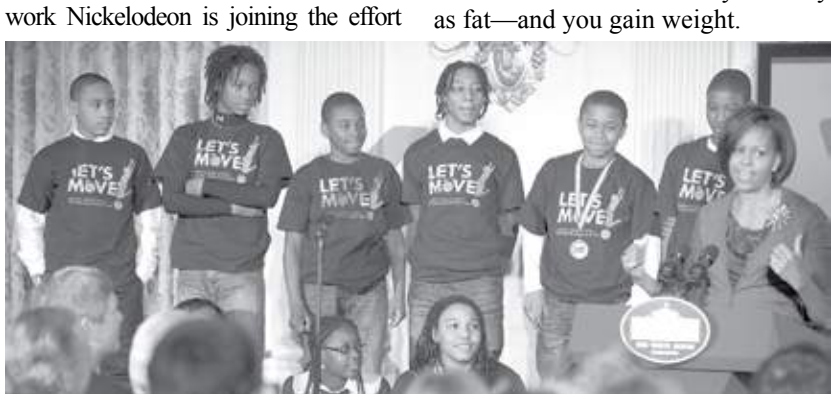
WASHINGTON—Do you love burgers and fries? What about ice cream and cake? If you answered yes, you're not alone. First lady Michelle Obama admits to loving those not-the-best-for-you treats, too. But the president's wife is worried that many kids are eating too much unhealthy food and getting not enough exercise.

In fact, a lot of people are concerned that a growing number of children today are considered obese—that is, they weigh significantly more than what would be considered a healthy weight for their height.

So Obama last week launched a new campaign, called Let's Move, that she hopes will encourage kids to get more physical activity and schools to offer more healthful foods. Television network Nickelodeon is joining the effort and plans to show commercials and other programming on its TV channels and Web sites that will help children learn more about nutrition and exercise.

Part of the problem is that kids are not as physically active as they used to be. A recent study by the Kaiser Family Foundation found that kids ages 8 to 18 spend an average of 10 hours 45 minutes using entertainment media each day, such as computers, television, video games and music players. That's up from 7 hours 29 minutes reported 10 years ago.

That's a problem because you can gain weight if you aren't active enough. It works like this: The food you eat provides your body with energy, which is measured in calories. The more active you are, the more calories you use up. On the other hand, if you eat more calories than you burn up, the extra calories are stored in your body as fat—and you gain weight.



THE WASHINGTON POST
At a White House event last week, first lady Michelle Obama enlists the Watkins Hornets, national Pee Wee football champions, as ambassadors for the nationwide "Let's Move" campaign to encourage kids to get more physical activity. Obama seeks a national goal of solving the challenge of childhood obesity within a generation so that today's children will reach adulthood at a healthy weight.

Katherine Marsh writes ghostly adventures

By Moira E. McLaughlin
(C) 2010, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—Author Katherine Marsh grew up outside New York City. To her, Grand Central Station's whispering gallery is "one of the coolest places in New York." If you talk really softly into a column there, your friend at another column across the room can hear you.

"What would happen," Marsh wondered, "if you whispered there and someone else answered, and no one was there?"

That's the question she sets out to answer in her books "The Night Tourist" and "The Twilight Prisoner." The adventure stories are about a 14-year-old boy named Jack and his ghost friend, Euri.

Marsh graduated from Yale University as an English major. She began writing children's books in the mornings, before work, about seven years ago, when she was an editor at a political magazine in Washington.

"I have always had this interest in writing fiction," she says. "I have a lot of memories and emotions around being a kid." She especially remembers having "a really tough year" when she was 14, when her parents divorced.

In her books, Marsh writes about things she loves and things that intrigue her: Greek mythology, New York City and the possibility of bringing someone you love back to life. Marsh's grandmother died a couple of years before she began writing the first book. "I really missed her a lot, and it got me thinking about the world of the dead," she says. "I sort of wanted to commune with her spirit."

THE WASHINGTON POST
Katherine Marsh's "The Night Tourist," left, and "The Twilight Prisoner" are adventure stories about a 14-year-old boy named Jack and his ghost friend, Euri. The Washington author began "The Night Tourist" thinking that Euri was a time traveler, not a ghost.

THE WASHINGTON POST
Author Katherine Marsh, of Washington, writes about things she loves and things that intrigue her: Greek mythology, New York City and the possibility of bringing someone you love back to life. Her advice to young authors: "Read!"

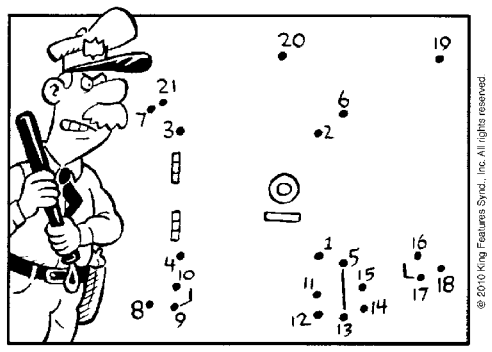
Marsh began "The Night Tourist" thinking that Euri was a time traveler, not a ghost. But that didn't quite work. "A lot of writing is this instinctual, gut feeling, and you know when something's off," Marsh says. She wrote the ending of "The Night Tourist" a couple of times and cried when she couldn't let one of her characters live.

Marsh's books deal with some heavy issues, including death and impossible love. She often invokes the myth of Orpheus, who tried to rescue his wife, Eurydice, from death but failed when he disobeyed the gods by turning around to look at her. But the books are also fun, and you'll learn a lot of cool facts about New York City.

Marsh's advice to young authors: "Read!" Read whatever interests you and draws you into a story, she says. Think about "the rhythms of language," and then "try your hand at it, and try to imitate some of the people you like best." Keeping a journal or writing e-mails are also good ways to practice your writing, she notes.

"Island of the Blue Dolphins," by Scott O'Dell, and "Walk Two Moons," by Sharon Creech, are a couple of Marsh's favorite children's books.

These days, Marsh is working full time on more children's books from her home in Washington, where she lives with her husband and her young son, Alek. She hopes to write a third one about Jack and Euri. "The Night Tourist" is set to be made into a movie. There's no release date yet, though, so you have plenty of time to read the book before you see the film.



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CONNECT THE DOTS and find out what is the least dangerous kind of robbery.

Answer: A safe robbery.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

PYRAMID OF WORD POWER!

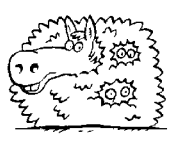
Are you "sharp" enough to solve this one is less than five minutes? Starting with the given word LATHERING at the bottom of our pyramid, try dropping one letter at a time as you work your way up, so that the remaining letters at each level spell out a new word. The following helpful hints are in ascending order.

1. Soaping up.
2. A small musical instrument.
3. A spirally curled lock of hair.
4. A prickly, stinging sensation.
5. A small amount of.
6. Found on a pitchfork.
7. A type of container.
8. A type of crowd.
9. The symbol for nitrogen.

Answers: (from the bottom up): Lathering, triangle, ringlet, tingle, tinge, tine, tin, in, N.

HIDDEN ANIMALS! Can you find the three animals hidden in these three sentences.

1. Her gift was a bronze bracelet.
2. The wall was covered with graffiti geraniums.
3. We must abolish or set aside these unjust laws.



Answers: 1. Zebra. 2. Tiger. 3. Horse.

BECOME A "GIANT" BY SOLVING THIS IN ONE MINUTE!

See if you can find the four five-letter words needed to fill in the word square at the right. All words must read the same across and down. A few hints are:

1. A large person (given).
2. Dome-shaped dwelling.
3. Type of clock.
4. Relating to Scandinavia.
5. Very large books.

1 G	2 I	3 A	4 N	5 T
2 I				
3 A				
4 N				
5 T				

Answers: 1. Giant. 2. Igloo. 3. Alarm (clock). 4. Norse. 5. Tomes.

Illustrated by David Coulson

Don't cage cat

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I have a precious little kitty (1 year old) that I got from a rescue that has taken a liking to relieving herself on my bed! What do I do other than keeping her caged?—Frustrated in Philadelphia

DEAR FRUSTRATED: Take her out of the cage! I have a good idea why she's relieving herself on your bed. I don't know much about your living situation, but cats should not be caged or crated for long periods of time, and only to protect them from harm—not as a barrier or punishment.

Cats are very different from dogs, and using a cage will not "train" her to do anything but be more angry. And cats will express anger and frustration in a way that you can't miss. Her relieving habit is most likely directly related to being stuck in the cage. She knows full well that you sleep on that bed!

I've had only one cat do the same to me, and it was entirely my fault. I accidentally shut him in my bedroom as I left for work. Cut off from my other cat, his food and his litter box, he expressed his displeasure quite clearly. But it only happened once. I made sure he was out of the room from then on before closing the door, and he never again was put in that position of having only one way to communicate.

If you don't want your cat to soil the bed, keep her outside of your bedroom. Even if you're in a studio and can't close off the bedroom, you can screen the bed (literally—a roll of window screening at the hardware store costs less than 10 dollars) to keep her away. But she needs relatively free rein around the rest of the house or apartment, access to food and her litter box, and a view of the outside. And put the cage into a closet, out of sight. Don't use it unless you're transporting her to the vet.

■ ■ ■

Send your pet questions to Sam Mazzotta at ask@pawscorner.com, or write to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. Find more pet resources at www.PawsCorner.com.

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Paw's corner
by Sam Mazzotta

Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

■ It was British journalist Jeremy Campbell who made the following sage observation: "Computers are good at swift, accurate computation and at storing great masses of information. The brain, on the other hand, is not as efficient a number cruncher and its memory is often highly fallible; a basic inexactness is built into its design. The brain's strong point is its flexibility."

■ In 1911, it became illegal in China to wear a pigtail.

■ One of Ernest Hemingway's early English teachers claimed that the future Nobel Prize winner would "never learn to write."

■ More from the files of hangover cures from around the world: In Japan, pickled plums are reputed to ease the morning-after ails; in Italy, it's (quite sensibly) coffee. The Chinese drink strong green tea, while in the Netherlands it's the hair of the dog—the Dutch advocate beer as a remedy. Danes eat salt, while Mexicans eat shrimp (I'll take the Mexican remedy any day). Perhaps the oddest remedy is practiced in Russia: Sufferers there head to the sauna, where they proceed to whip out the toxins with leafy birch branches. No word on what they do in winter, when the birches are, presumably, leafless.

■ The Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways—better known as the Interstate Highway System—is the largest public works project in the history of the world. At 46,876 miles, it's also the world's largest highway system.

■ Stephen Foster, known as the Father of American Music, originally got paid a grand total of 2 cents for each of his musical scores that was sold.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "There is no nonsense so arrant that it cannot be made the creed of the vast majority by adequate governmental action."—Bertrand Russell

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MAGIC MAZE ● **TESTY WORDS**

P W E S P M T T J H E B Y V T
Q O H D T L S N I G E D B Y W
T R P I R E M T E N K I F D C
G R E A T E S T I M O N Y C O
B Y W A U E V T S Q A O U M N
K I L F T D S A A T B T Z X T
W T S E T E D T T T E U S S E
Q O R N T L J E O S E H F E S
D P C N A Y S W T N E V T S T
Q P I N L T N A T S E T O R P
K I H F E C B Z Y W V U S R Q

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Attest	Intestine	Protestant	Testimony
Cutest	Latest	Testament	Teston
Detest	Pretest	Testate	Whitestone
Greatest	Protest	Testaverde	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	x		–		25
+		–		x	
	÷		x		12
x		x		+	
	x		+		14
11		25		21	

1 2 3 4 5 6 8 9 9

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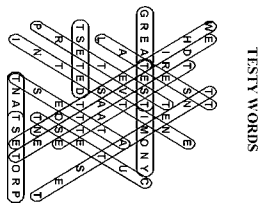
MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



GO FIGURE ANSWER

3	x	9	–	2	25
+		–		x	
8	÷	4	x	6	12
x		x		+	
1	x	5	+	9	14
	11		25		21

Turn worn sweater into new mittens

Donna's Day Creative family fun
by Donna Erickson

This is the time of year when kids and adults like me lose one or more of their mittens. Our pairs simply don't match up the way they did in November. If you're in that same predicament, try this quick and super-easy sewing activity to replenish your supply for the weeks left in the season. Make a new pair of mittens from an old sweater.

Here's how:

1. Find an old wool sweater that's about ready for the rag bag. Be sure the cuffs are still tight around the sleeves. Lay the sweater flat on a work surface.

2. Make a mitten pattern by tracing a favorite mitten on a sturdy piece of paper, such as a paper grocery bag. Add 1/2 inch on all sides. Cut it out.

3. Put the pattern on the sleeve of your sweater, placing the wrist end of the pattern over the cuff end of the sleeve. Pin the pattern to the sweater. Carefully cut out the mitten pattern.

4. Sew it up! With wrong sides facing each other, sew the mitten together using the small stitch on your sewing machine, reinforcing the thumb portion. Turn the mitten right side out. Make a matching mitten from the other sleeve, using the reverse side of the same pattern.

By now your old sweater may look like it has been through surgery, but you might discover other ways to make use of the remaining portions. Upcycle more of the sweater, if it has an interesting design or figure on the front, such as a sailboat, flowers or an animal. Cut out the design with a heart- or square-shape paper pattern, and you can make a decorative doll pillow with your child.

Cut a plain, matching piece from the back of the sweater. Sew the two pieces together, leaving a small opening. Stuff the pillow with fabric scraps or polyfill. Stitch the opening closed. Decorate it with a button or ribbon.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

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Life & Style

Kathryn Grayson, star of '40s, '50s musicals, dies

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Kathryn Grayson, whose beauty and lilting soprano voice brightened such popular MGM musicals of the 1940s and '50s as "Anchors Aweigh," "Show Boat" and "Kiss Me Kate," has died. She was 88.

This 1951 file photo shows actress and singer Kathryn Grayson, whose beauty and lilting soprano voice brightened some of the most popular movie musicals of the 1940s and '50s, has died at age 88 at her home in Los Angeles.

AP

Grayson died Wednesday at her Los Angeles home, the actress' longtime secretary and companion, Sally Sherman, told The Associated Press.

"She just went to sleep and didn't wake up," Sherman said Thursday.

Grayson's youthful ambition was to sing opera, but she wasn't able to accomplish that dream until after her movie career ended. While still a teenager, she was placed under contract at MGM at a time when the studio was assembling a stable of musical talent that would dominate the era of great musicals.

"I thought they were wasting their time and money," Grayson recalled of her first days at the studio. "I even told (studio boss) Louis B. Mayer that. He said he knew a lot more than a 16-year-old girl who is and who isn't good material for pictures.

"He offered a deal: I would make a screen test, and if the studio liked the test, I would shut up forever. If not, I would go.

"It was the longest test in motion picture history. They spent hundreds of thousands of dollars; it was almost a two-reeler .... The studio liked it. I told Mr. Mayer I didn't like it. He went home with a heart attack."

Concerned, Grayson agreed to stay, and she turned down an offer to sing "Lucia" at the Metropolitan Opera. She later learned that Mayer had two ploys to persuade recalcitrant actors: to cry or to claim a heart attack.

Like Lana Turner, Esther Williams, Donna Reed and other MGM newcomers, Grayson was given a tryout as Mickey Rooney's sweetheart in the studio's popular Andy Hardy film series. She played the title role in "Andy Hardy's Private Secretary" and sang Strauss's "Voices of Spring." Mayer was convinced that he had a future star.

She was cast in three minor films, including a musical with Abbot and Costello, then played Gene Kelly's girlfriend in a wartime revue that included major MGM stars, "Thousands Cheer."

You betcha: Fey's 'SNL' return as Palin is likely

NEW YORK (AP)—Tina Fey will probably reprise her famous impression of Sarah Palin when she hosts "Saturday Night Live" in April, the comedian told The Associated Press.

"It's inevitable that we'll try it, at least," Fey said in an interview Tuesday. "We'll see if it makes it to air."

Officials at the NBC sketch show wouldn't comment; "SNL" generally doesn't discuss any planned sketches, given that much can change even in the hours before show time.

Fey's performances as the former Alaska governor and Republican vice presidential candidate were an icon of the 2008 campaign and drew huge ratings for "SNL."

In this Sept. 13, 2008 file photo originally provided by NBC, actress Tina Fey, plays Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, on "Saturday Night Live" in New York.

AP

Fey made four appearances on the show as Palin, earning her an Emmy in September for guest actor. She was also voted 2008's AP Entertainer of the Year.

The comedian said the whole experience was "a little overwhelming."

"It was the strangest thing that's ever happened to me," Fey said. "I've never had anything fall in my lap like that. Everything is usually me trying to convince the people of Earth that it's OK for me to perform. ... That felt like the opposite."

Palin also made a cameo on "SNL," briefly appearing alongside Fey in October 2008. Afterward, Palin said she had fun on the show and would do it again if asked.

In her memoir, "Going Rogue," Palin wrote that she grew up watching "SNL."

The 39-year-old Fey was a head writer and cast member of "SNL" before leaving to create the sitcom "30 Rock," on which she stars. She also stars alongside Steve Carell in the big-screen comedy "Date Night," which will be released April 9.

In loving memory of

ANTONIO CAMACHO TENORIO

1926 - February 17, 2010

Lovingly known as "Tan Ton"

was called to rest on February 17, 2010

Masses of intentions are offered daily at six o'clock in the morning at Mount Carmel Cathedral.

Antonio Camacho Tenorio is survived his families:

Evelyn J. Tenorio, Lynnette F. Tenorio and John I. Hirsh-Olivia and Mia Hirsh, Brenda Y. Tenorio and Fred Smith and numerous nephew and nieces.

He was predeceased by his wife Janet S. Tenorio, and his parents, Juan Pangelinan Tenorio and Francisca Camacho Tenorio; ***his brothers, sisters, and in-laws:*** Luis Camacho and Rita S. Tenorio; Albert Camacho and Rita C. Tenorio; Maria Tenorio and Herman R. Guerrero; Ana Camacho Tenorio; Cecilia Tenorio and Manuel B. Sablan; Jose Camacho and Soledad T. Tenorio; Santiago Camacho and Maria S. Tenorio and Froilan C. Tenorio.

Funeral arrangements will be announced at a later date.
Your thoughts and prayers are sincerely appreciated.

The Family

Baby sitter needs more than a moment's notice

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I am 17 and baby-sit regularly for a family on my street. The kids are well-behaved and enjoy it when I go there to watch them. My problem is their mother never gives me notice when she needs me. She'll ask if I can baby-sit that day, or even worse, that moment. Sometimes she'll just say something vague like, "Sometime later today—I'll let you know when I need you."

I love the kids and enjoy looking after them, but I do not appreciate their mother's inconsiderate behavior. How should I deal with her next "request"?

SEETHING SITTER IN NEW YORK

DEAR SEETHING: The next time the woman calls at the last minute, tell her you're sorry, but you already have something scheduled, and when she needs you to baby-sit to please give you more notice so you won't disappoint her. And if she isn't definite about what time she wants you to be there, tell her you need to know NOW so you can make any arrangements you need to.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My wife and I were recently invited to a friend's home for a screening of a movie in their home theater. About 15 other guests were a lso in attendance. We arrived on time and chose our seats by leaving our coats on them, then joined the other guests for pre-movie socializing.

When we returned to the room to watch the film, we found that a college-age couple had tossed our things aside and taken our seats.

Because there were no other seats together, we told them the coats were ours and that we had placed them on the seats for a reason. The couple left.

Later, another couple mentioned that they thought we had overstepped our bounds—that we should have said nothing because this was a private home. I had always been taught that one could set one's items down, and that it indicated that seats were spoken for. Were we in the wrong?

WONDERING IN COLUMBUS

DEAR WONDERING: Everybody was "in the wrong." The young couple should not have moved your things and grabbed your seats. Because you were all guests in a private home, you and your wife should have taken what seats were available. (I mean, would it have killed you to sit apart for a couple of hours?) And last, the couple who corrected you should have kept their mouths shut.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have a special needs daughter who is currently on a waiting list for a service dog. She has been moved to the priority list, and I'm hoping she will receive her dog within the next two months.

While I'm thrilled about the opportunities the dog will provide her, it has also raised a concern. What do I say when people ask what her disability is?

I know that legally no one is allowed to ask that question—per the Americans With Disabilities Act—and I would have no problem telling nosy strangers to keep their questions to themselves. But there are people—like my co-workers and my daughter's classmates—whom we can't avoid.

If you see my daughter on good days, you might not notice anything "different," although she has a number of significant health and emotional issues. What is the correct way to respond to the honest questions without revealing my daughter's medical history to people who have no need to know?

MOM IN IOWA

DEAR MOM: Always be polite, but do not allow yourself to be pressured into giving specifics. Respond by saying, "Oh, I don't want to bore you—the dog helps my daughter." Then change the subject.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Simon Cowell thinks a woman will win 'Idol'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Simon Cowell believes a woman is likely to win his final season on "American Idol." The acerbic British judge told a teleconference Thursday he thinks one of the 12 women among the ninth season's 24 semifinalists has a good shot to win the Fox singing contest.

"We've had a few years of guys winning the show, and I would say there is definitely a better chance of a girl winning the show this year, certainly, than last year," Cowell said.

Whatever the gender, Cowell, who will leave at the end of the season to executive produce and judge an American edition of "The X Factor," just wants to crown someone relevant.

"I'd love to find a Taylor Swift," he said.

Lady Gaga is his top pick for a potential music industry mentor to guide this season's contestants, which include platinum-haired crooner Lilly Scott and throwback rocker Tyler Grady. Cowell called the outrageous Lady Gaga the "most relevant pop artist in the world right now."

Past mentors have included Gwen Stefani, Dolly Parton, Jamie Foxx and Quentin Tarantino.

As far as his replacement goes, Cowell said a couple of folks have already asked him for his gig, but they were both "boring." He insisted the right candidates must have music industry experience and "know what they are talking about."

Does that mean newcomer Ellen DeGeneres, the talk show host with no formal music training, didn't belong on the judging panel? "She's been an artist," he retorted. "It wasn't meant to diss her credentials."

AP

In this publicity image released by Fox, "American Idol" season nine contestant, Lilly Scott, of Littleton, Colo., is shown in Los Angeles.

AP

U.S. actor and Web-savvy activist Ashton Kutcher speaks to the media in Moscow, Russia, Thursday, Feb. 18, 2010.

Kutcher to Twitter fans during Russian visit

MOSCOW (AP)—Hollywood actor and Web-savvy activist Ashton Kutcher says he will "crowd source" questions about the Kremlin's push to develop a Russian Silicon Valley to his 4.5 million Twitter fans.

The actor is part of a U.S. delegation of technology and social media leaders that arrived in Moscow as part of White House efforts to improve ties with Russia.

Kutcher told reporters here Thursday that he will "translate the Russian voice to an American audience" and seek advice on Russia's efforts to build its own high-tech center.

The Kremlin announced recently it would develop its own Silicon Valley to help modernize Russia's economy, which is highly dependent on energy exports.

During the weeklong visit, the delegation will urge the Russian government, businessmen and students to utilize social media and innovative technologies to tackle problems like human trafficking and corruption.

The visit is part of an effort strengthen ties between the United States and Russia after years of strained relations.

In Celebration of Her New Life

Maria Arriola Benavente Atalig

May 19, 1935 — February 14, 2010

In her new life, she now joins her:

Parents: Ignacio Villagomez & Rita Arriola Benavente
Daughter: Phyllis Atalig Leuta
Brother: Jose Arriola Benavente
Sister: Trinidad Arriola Benavente
Sister-In-Law: Magdalena C. Benavente
Niece & Nephews: Norbert, Francisca & Paul Lee Camacho
Parents In-Law: Gillermo A. & Juana Q. Atalig

She is survived by her:

Former-Husband: Felipe Quitugua Atalig
Son-in-law: Masina Leuta

Children:
Ron B. and Anne S. Atalig (Roanne Isa and Ron Napu)
Eric B. Atalig, Kelley and Jordan Butcher (Kayla and Brent Parsons, Eric Devin and Kianna)

Grand Children:
Phyllisina L. and Calistro Reyes, Jr. (Toa, Malosi & Vaaina Eling)
Vaaia Leuta and Andrew Duenas (Mitiana)
Tanielu A. Leuta and Tavita A. Leuta

Caregiver: Nelsie Lasaga

Brothers, Sisters and In-Laws:
Martina K. Benavente & Family
Eleuterio A. Benavente
Dolores B. Camacho & Family
Veronica A. Benavente
Irmina B. Cox & Family
Estanislao A. and Abelina Benavente & Family
Luis A. and Susan Benavente & Family
†Domingo Q. Atalig & Family
Joaquin Q. Atalig & Family
Ana A. Taimanao & Family

Daily Mass is being offered at 6 a.m. at Mt. Carmel Cathedral. St. Jude Church at 6:00 p.m. Rosary immediately following the evening Mass.

On Monday, February 22, 2010, viewing will be at Borja Funeral Home from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at Mt. Carmel Cathedral at 10:00a.m. Interment service at the Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Your Prayers is greatly appreciated.

From The Family

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

AARGHH.' I MISSED.' IT'S THESE DARN FUZZY MITTENS.' THE SNOW STICKS TO 'EM AND YOU CAN'T THROW STRAIGHT.' DARN IT.' DARN IT.' DARN IT.'
© 1990 Universal Press Syndicate
I HATE THESE FUZZY MITTENS.' IF ONLY MOM HAD GOTTEN ME PADDED GLOVES INSTEAD OF THESE NO-GOOD, AWFUL, ROTTEN FUZZY MITTENS.'
WHAP.'
2-20
WELL I'LL BE.' MY FUZZY MITTENS HAVE PADS.'

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

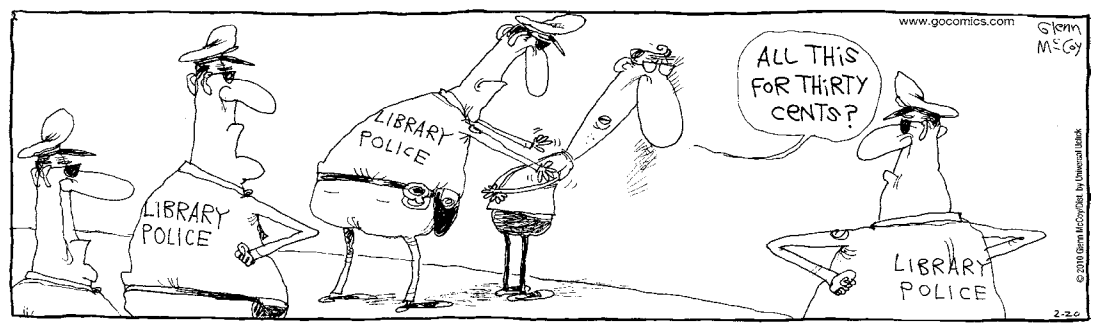
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

HEY, BUDDY. WOW. NOTHING I LIKE MORE THAN SEEING YOU READING A BOOK.
WHAT DO YOU HAVE THERE?
"DIARY OF A WIMPY KID."
www.gocomics.com
© 2010 Universal Uclick
WELL, I WAS A LATE BLOOMER, TOO... MAKE SURE AND EAT YOUR VEGETABLES AND YOU'LL BE OKAY.
2-20

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Econ. statistic
4 Track circuits
8 Un-locked?
12 Mine, partially
13 On the briny
14 Met melody
15 Big fuss
16 "The Da Vinci Code" priory
17 Campus bigwig
18 Whom Sacaga-wea aided
21 Stannum
22 Powell co-star, often
23 Structure destroyed by Katrina
26 Level the playing field?
27 Pod occupant
30 Tiny bit
31 "Survivor" housing
32 Collabora-tive Web document
33 Cornfield shout
34 Cribbage scorer
35 Some other time
36 General Mills cereal
37 Right angle
38 Old-time comedy duo
45 Duel tool
46 Enter
47 Geologi-cal time
48 List-end-ing abbr.
49 Aware of
50 Big shot
51 Survey
52 Loch — Monster
53 "Of course"

DOWN
1 Soccer score
2 Undraped
3 Ship's front
4 Timmy's dog
5 Chinese or Thai
6 Drudge
7 Baseball venue
8 "Men Behaving —"
9 Geometry stat
10 Tale teller
11 Uncom-fortably moist
19 Detail
20 Intimidate
23 Varnish ingredient
24 Schedule abbr.
25 Solemn promise
26 Oktober-fest souvenir
27 Pendu-lum's place
28 — out a living
29 Football fill
31 Honey-comb cell, e.g.
32 Humpty's perch
34 Math ratios
35 Grassy plains
36 Gloomy ring
37 Rewrites, maybe
38 Road Runner's noise
39 Doing
40 Authentic
41 Zilch
42 Eugene of "American Pie"
43 One of HOMES
44 Siestas

Solution time: 27 mins.

A	L	B		R	A	W		S	H	A	N	T
T	I	L		A	S	H		A	E	R	I	E
O	B	I		S	T	O	C	K	P	I	L	E
M	E	N		P	R	O	L	E				
S	L	I	T		A	P	E		A	I	N	T
			H	E	Y		O	O	D	L	E	S
O	U	T	E	R				V	O	L	T	A
P	R	E	F	A	B		M	A	R			
T	I	N	T		A	B	E		E	D	I	T
			S	T	O	R	E		E	N	E	
S	T	O	C	K	H	O	L	M		I	F	S
R	A	D	I		M	O	M			S	E	T
I	D	E	S	T		S	T	Y		T	R	Y

Yesterday's answer 2-20

1	2	3	■	4	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12			■	13				■	14			
15			■	16				■	17			
18			19					20				
■	■	■	21			■	22			■	■	■
23	24	25			■	26			■	27	28	29
30				■	31			■	32			
33			■	34			■	35				
■	■	■	36			■	37			■	■	■
38	39	40				41				42	43	44
45				■	46				■	47		
48				■	49				■	50		
51				■	52				■	53		

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Rihanna, 22; Brian Littrell, 35; Andrew Shue, 43; Cindy Crawford, 44

Happy Birthday: You must separate your emotions from your professional plans and maintain a practical approach. Focus on the here and now and what it will take to remove any connection to past problems. In order to move forward and pursue what means the most to you, dedication will be required. Your numbers are 2, 13, 17, 20, 26, 31, 44

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Don't run from situations that need to be fixed. Secretive action will only lead to more trouble. Get things out in the open and you will find a solution. Someone else's limitation may be to your benefit. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Your power of persuasion will work wonders if you address a group or organization that can benefit from your services. Don't let someone you live with upset you when your focus should be on your professional goals. Be direct. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): A user-friendly environment will equate to greater production. Don't let someone you love cost you financially or emotionally. If you overspend, you will not be able to complete what needs to be done. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Travel for business or pleasure will pay off. You need to be aware of what's available if you are going to make the right choices. A move or a change of scenery will do you good and will help you get ahead personally and professionally. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Refuse to give in to anyone trying to get you to do something you don't want to do. An argument can be expected but it's still better than getting stuck with responsibilities you don't want. Compromise won't work. ✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Play every card you've got in order to finalize a deal with someone you care for. A commitment can be made and plans put into play. Visit someone who can provide you with the information you need to move ahead with your plans. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Proceed with caution. Taking a chance when it comes to financial investments will lead to loss. A creative outlet or group that you join will help you see where you are headed. Expressive dialogue will result in much-needed support. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): This is not the time to waffle or to let someone get the upper hand. Love is in the stars, so discuss your personal plans with someone special. An evening out or enjoying a common interest will help you explain what you want long term. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): If you move too fast, you can expect to make mistakes and suffer financial, emotional and personal loss. Travel or dealing with an authority figure will not turn out well. Delays and last-minute alterations will contribute to greater confusion. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Look, see and do. There is nothing you can't accomplish if you set your mind to it. An interesting change in your surroundings will be conducive to love and romance. Don't let someone else's responsibility become your burden. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You may have to deal with emotional issues if you haven't been completely upfront. A personal reevaluation will help you express your plans with greater enthusiasm and clarity, so that no one feels jilted by your recent decisions. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Love is apparent and you should be planning an elaborate evening with someone you want to spend more time with. Old emotional feelings will surface, confirming that you are in the right place with the right person. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You have a vivid imagination and a strong will. You follow your own path. You are aggressive, willing to experiment and you adapt well to change.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	4	7			3			
		2	9			8		
								7
5	3							
2			8	4	1			3
							2	9
8								
		9			6	5		
			1			2	4	

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 2/20

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	8	1	9	4	7	5	2	3
3	4	2	6	1	5	7	9	8
9	7	5	2	8	3	6	1	4
7	6	9	8	3	4	1	5	2
4	5	8	1	2	6	9	3	7
1	2	3	7	5	9	8	4	6
2	1	6	3	9	8	4	7	5
5	3	7	4	6	1	2	8	9
8	9	4	5	7	2	3	6	1

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 2/19

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

TAYLOR SWIFT Solution: 9 letters

D	T	O	G	G	S	S	E	L	R	A	E	F	R	S
L	E	E	N	N	R	W	R	I	T	E	R	E	O	T
S	S	M	I	O	U	A	O	(G)	E	L	I	M	S	T
E	E	O	O	L	S	O	(N)	D	O	Z	A	E	T	O
T	Y	R	I	E	U	(I)	Y	T	A	I	B	U	H	C
A	E	E	D	B	(S)	J	L	R	N	E	O	T	U	S
D	L	H	U	N	V	E	C	A	N	Y	M	E	G	P
Y	U	D	T	S	A	N	V	I	Y	C	G	E	N	O
R	F	N	S	T	I	L	H	K	G	A	O	N	O	R
T	I	A	O	L	Y	C	C	R	T	E	R	A	S	D
N	T	B	T	S	A	U	A	S	N	S	Y	G	R	R
U	U	I	N	M	L	W	T	O	U	R	I	E	U	A
O	A	N	G	G	U	I	T	A	R	I	S	T	O	E
C	E	I	M	A	G	E	W	C	O	N	C	E	R	T
P	B	O	R	C	H	E	T	T	A	M	U	B	L	A

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Album, Alison, Amos, Andres, Artist, Band Hero, Beautiful Eyes, Belong, Best, Big Machine, Borchetta, Caitlin, Concert, Country, Crazier, Dates, Demo, Fearless, Grant, Guitarist, Image, Juliet, Lucky You, McGraw, Meadows, Our Song, Pennsylvania, Romeo, Scott, Sing, Smile, Stage, Studio, Teardrops, Teenage, Thug, Tone, Tour, Wilson, Writer, Young

Yesterday's Answer: Dedicated

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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

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Differences: 1. Mailbag is black. 2. Apron is different. 3. Door has small window. 4. Woman has headband. 5. House is missing. 6. Mailman's arm patch is gone.

Wishing Well®

8	2	6	8	7	5	3	8	7	6	5	3	8
O	Y	H	V	E	A	J	E	N	A	W	O	R
6	4	2	3	8	5	2	7	6	4	5	2	5
S	B	O	B	C	O	U	E	T	E	R	R	T
4	7	2	4	3	4	5	2	4	2	6	2	8
A	R	W	G	I	R	H	A	E	N	E	T	O
6	5	3	7	8	4	2	6	7	5	3	7	4
N	Y	M	G	M	E	S	D	Y	G	P	R	A
7	6	5	3	4	6	5	7	4	2	3	2	7
E	E	I	R	B	C	F	N	L	A	O	R	E
3	4	8	5	7	2	7	2	8	2	8	2	8
V	E	E	T	W	E	E	M	W	E	I	T	T
6	7	3	6	3	8	6	8	6	8	6	8	6
I	D	E	S	S	H	I	J	O	O	N	Y	S

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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Super Crossword

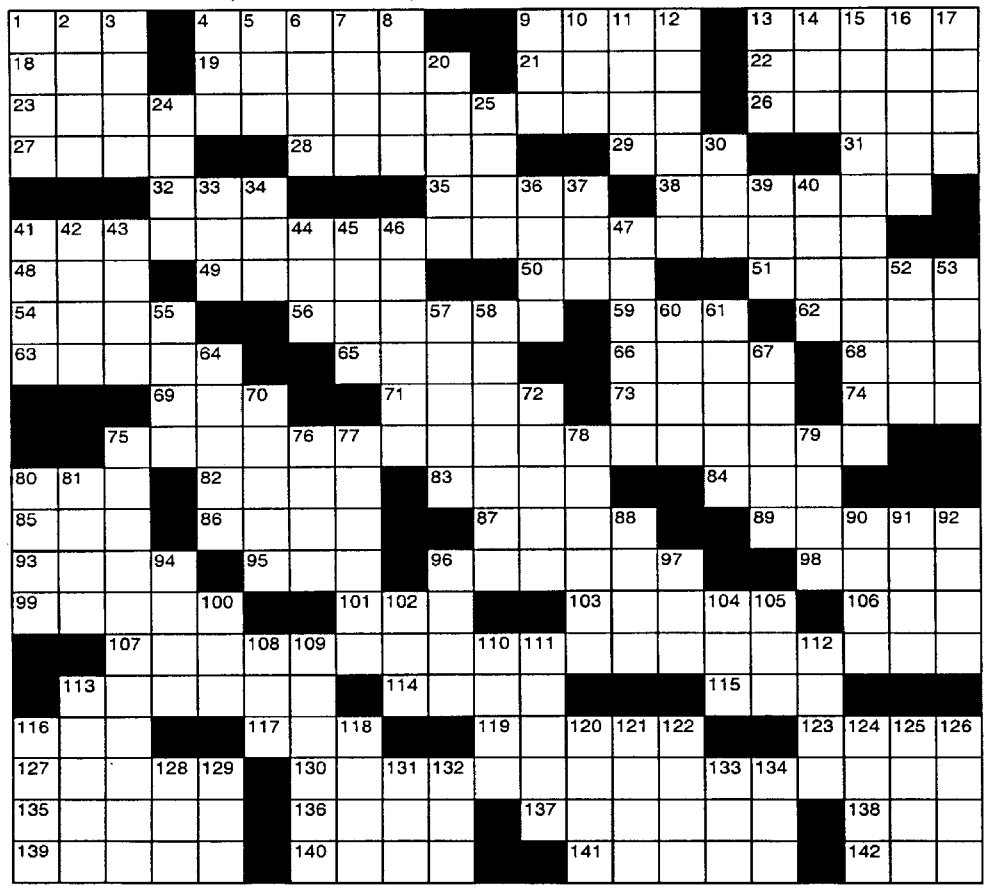
NOVEL BEGINNINGS

ACROSS

1 "One — Apple" ('71 song)
4 Broadway org.
9 Presidential pooch
13 Loudly, to Liszt
18 Spud bud
19 Propped (up)
21 Author Murdoch
22 Menotti title character
23 Over-laundered muumuu?
26 Aquarium fish
27 Viscount's better
28 Walked off with
29 Baby beagle
31 Noun suffix
32 Objective
35 Lose luster
38 One of the Sopranos
41 Embarrassed late-night host?
48 Humble abode
49 Hawke of "Training Day"
50 Start to cry?
51 Pageant prop
54 Jack of "Rio Lobo"
56 Dicta
59 Seek change?
62 Coasted
63 Cock and bull
65 Sup in style
66 "Rule Britannia" composer
68 Call — day
69 Fill in
71 — Scotia
73 Sculptor Bernini
74 Snead or Spiegel
75 Tarzan the Studious?
80 Ingot
82 Airhead
83 Fruit-tree spray
84 Biol. or chem.
85 — Dhabi
86 Art deco designer
87 Sicilian volcano
89 Humble abode
93 Gershwin heroine
95 Wordless greeting
96 "Every — You Take" ('83 hit)
98 Cheer competitor
99 Singer John
101 Organ of equilibrium
103 Maguire of "Spider-Man"
106 Singer Barry
107 Undecided activists?
113 Roman writer
114 Hit hard
115 Reverence
116 It may be fake
117 Author Umberto
119 Adjusted an Amati
123 Lhasa —
127 Come in
130 Good source of minerals?
135 Cold sound
136 "Ritorna vincitor!" singer
137 Piston packing
138 Shelley's "— Skylark"
139 Versify
140 Inn offering
141 New Hampshire campus
142 Hog heaven?

DOWN

1 Actress Neuwirth
2 Auel heroine
3 Forest beauty
4 Request
5 "Quiet!"
6 Dove sounds
7 In — (bored)
8 Cuban currency
9 Evergreen tree
10 Exist
11 Speech problem
12 Take for granted
13 Too big for one's breeches?
14 Doolittle's digs
15 Type of philosophy
16 Hurl
17 Panache
20 Dutch pottery
24 Sitka's st.
25 Work in Vegas
30 By means of
33 Cover the cake
34 Wrestling surface
36 Labor leader Eugene
37 WWII area
39 Qty.
40 Emcee's site
41 '54 James Arness film
42 A shake in the grass?
43 List ender
44 Pi follower
45 Cooking fat
46 Close
47 Trinidad's neighbor
52 Moreno or Hayworth
53 Inspector Dalgliesh
55 Engage, as gears
57 "— Gay"
58 Party animal
60 Palladino of "ER"
61 Behaves like a beaver
64 Kid stuff?
67 Methuselah's dad
70 Borg or Ulvaeus
72 Subside
75 Reliable
76 As many as
77 Essential
78 Elaborate
79 Brilliant display
80 Movie piglet
81 Explorer Tasman
88 Energy source
90 Offensive
91 Churchill's successor
92 Time to give up
94 Head for the clouds
96 La — Tar Pits
97 "Six Feet Under" network
100 Pro-gun grp.
102 PD alert
104 — Marie Saint
105 Evergreen tree
108 Expert
109 The gods guzzle it
110 — Spumante
111 Newscaster Connie
112 Nut part
113 Feeling
116 Dread
118 Phil Donahue's birthplace
120 Neighbor of Mont.
121 Gaelic
122 Luke, Bo, or Daisy
124 Prepares cherries
125 Glasgow guy
126 Hunky-dory
128 Accounting abbr.
129 Singer Tommy
131 Maestro de Waart
132 Hat for 125 Down
133 Game pieces
134 Canonized Mlle.



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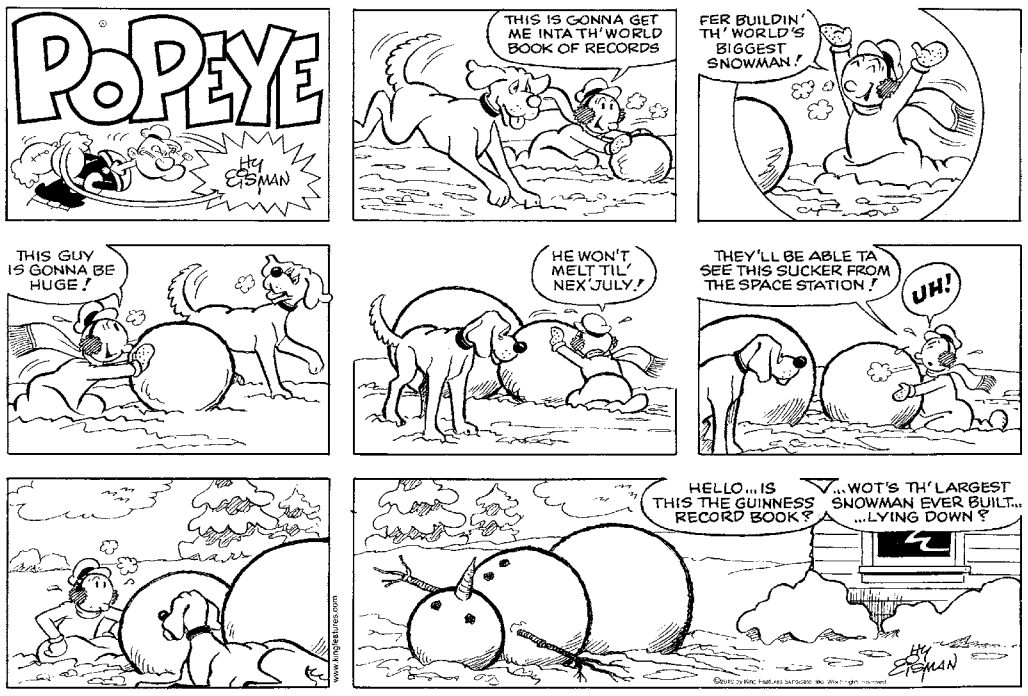
POPEYE
Hy EISMAN
THIS IS GONNA GET ME INTA TH' WORLD BOOK OF RECORDS
FER BUILDIN' TH' WORLD'S BIGGEST SNOWMAN!
THIS GUY IS GONNA BE HUGE!
HE WON'T MELT TIL' NEX' JULY!
THEY'LL BE ABLE TA SEE THIS SUCKER FROM THE SPACE STATION!
UH!
HELLO... IS THIS THE GUINNESS RECORD BOOK?
...WOT'S TH' LARGEST SNOWMAN EVER BUILT... ...LYING DOWN?
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They'll Do It Every Time — by Al Scaduto

SOBER ADVICE DEPT—
IF YOU'RE DRINKING TO FORGET, PAY IN ADVANCE..
BAR
Thanx to R. WISHNER, CINCINNATI, OHIO
SAY IT AS IT IS DEPT—
SO, HEKKIE.. WHEN WILL YOU BE SIX?
WHEN I'M FINISHED BEING FIVE...
AL SCADUTO
Thanx to K. NOLAND, BOSTON, MA.
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BI-I-IG CRISIS— TV OUT OF ORDER...
WANT TO PLAY CARDS--OR A GAME? ER--OR LISTEN TO SOME PHONOGRAPH RECORDINGS.. WELL--WHAT?
NAW! WHATTA YA SAY WE GO OUT AN' TAKE IN A MOVIE? I HATE JUST SITTIN' HERE!
YA THINK BUSTED TVs ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR BROKEN MARRIAGES?
I'M BORED..
I DUNNO-- Y'KNOW WHAT? MAYBE I'LL DO MY HOMEWORK--
THIS USED T'HAPPEN WHEN OUR RADIO WENT BLOOIE··· THEN WE JUST WENT TO BED···
Thanx to J. TRIOLAR, THE BRONX, N.Y.
www.kingfeatures.com

Trivia test

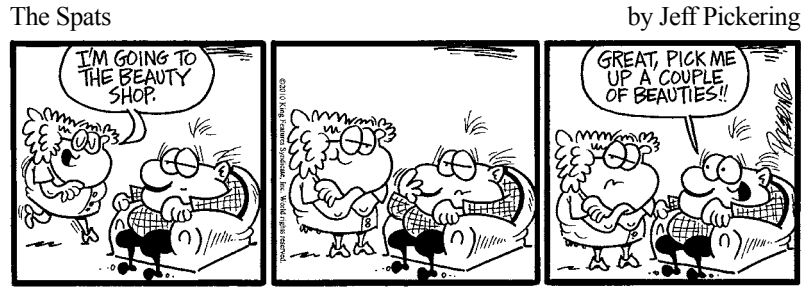
by Fifi Rodriguez

1. LANGUAGE: In old England, what was the profession of someone known as a baxter?
2. TELEVISION: In what country was "Jeopardy!" host Alex Trebek born?
3. MEDICAL: What is the medical name for "the bends"?
4. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What kind of animal would be described as "lupine"?
5. MUSIC: How many members are in the Mormon Tabernacle Choir?
6. GEOGRAPHY: The Mystic River flows through which U.S. state?
7. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What would a vexillologist study?
8. COMICS: In the comic strip "Peanuts," where was Snoopy born?
9. MOVIES: What film's theme song was "Lose Yourself" by Eminem?
10. FAMOUS QUOTATIONS: Who once said, "Depend upon it, sir, when a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully"?

Amber Waves — by Dave T. Phipps

CLASS WHO HERE CAN TELL ME WHO OUR CURRENT PRESIDENT IS?
OUR CURRENT PRESIDENT IS PRESIDENT OBAMA.
AND WHO DOES HE ANSWER TO?
HIS MOTHER, JUST LIKE THE REST OF US!

The Spats — by Jeff Pickering



Answers

1. A baker
2. Canada
3. Decompression sickness, often a diving hazard
4. A wolf
5. 360
6. Massachusetts
7. Flags
8. Daisy Hill Puppy Farm
9. "8 Mile"
10. Samuel Johnson

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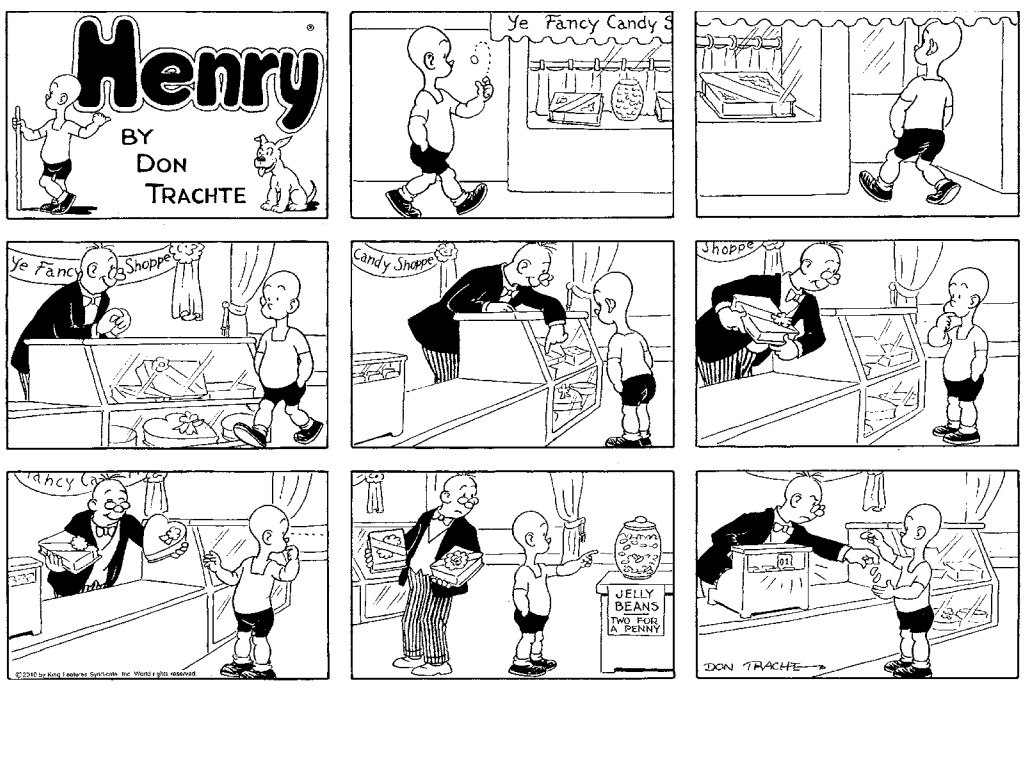
Saturday's Answers

Henry

BY DON TRACHTE



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• 3-Liner with picture	$24	$42
• 5-Liner with picture	$36	$57

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- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

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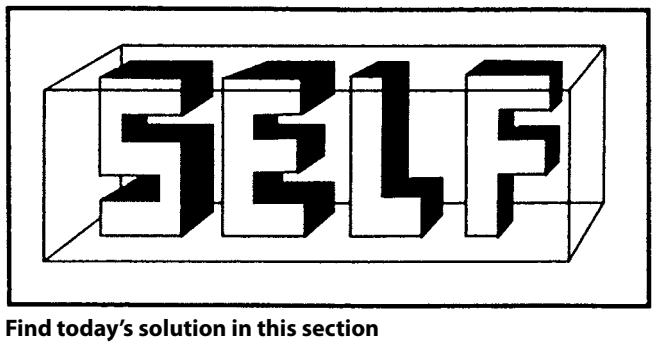

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Find today's solution in this section

Anthony has 40 as Nuggets end Cavs' 13-game streak

CLEVELAND (AP)—Carmelo Anthony scored 40 points, including the winning basket, and the Denver Nuggets overcame LeBron James' triple-double and ended the Cleveland Cavaliers' 13-game streak with a 118-116 victory in overtime Thursday night.

James had his triple-double by the end of regulation, finishing with 43 points, 13 rebounds and 15 assists, but Anthony matched him shot for shot, hitting the winner on a deep jumper over an outstretched James with 1.9 seconds left.

Denver's Kenyon Martin had 18 points and a season-high 17 rebounds, but the night belonged to two of the three top scorers in the league, who put on quite a display. Anthony played 48 minutes, adding seven assists and six rebounds for the Nuggets.

Denver had plenty of motivation to begin the second half of its season with a win.

Nuggets coach George Karl was on the bench despite battling nausea and headaches in recent days as a result of chemotherapy. Karl coached his first game since disclosing Tuesday he has neck and throat cancer.

James and Anthony entered first and third in the league in scoring, respectively, and didn't disappoint. The two combined to make just 4 of 20 shots in the first quarter, then spent the rest of the night hitting huge shots in each other's face.

The Cavaliers had a chance to win it at the buzzer, but James slipped while receiving the inbound pass and his 3-pointer rattled off the rim. An exhausted James, who played 47 minutes, missed his final four shots in overtime. His triple-double was the third of the season and 27th of his career. His 15 assists tied a career high.

Karl will likely miss some games and practices while undergoing a rigorous six-week treatment program of radiation and chemotherapy, but he accompanied the Nuggets on their two-game trip to Cleveland and Washington, where Denver plays on Friday.

Shaquille O'Neal had 18 points and seven rebounds and J.J. Hickson had 14 points for Cleveland, which made just 23 of 40 free throws.

On the day the Cavaliers introduced Antawn Jamison as their newest star, their old one was at his best. James' big night came with Oscar Robertson in attendance. Robertson, who averaged a triple-double during the 1961-62 season, was honored before the game along with Jerry West, James and Anthony as co-captains of U.S. Olympic gold medal basketball teams.

Robertson and West captained the Americans' gold medal in 1960, while James and Anthony were the co-captains in 2008.

The Cavaliers were a bit short-handed since they traded Zydrunas Ilgauskas on Wednesday and didn't yet have Jamison available, the player they received in return from Washington in the three-team deal. The Cavs introduced Jamison on Thursday, but he wasn't activated in time for the game. The team is hopeful he can be in the lineup Friday at Charlotte.

Celtics 87, Lakers 86

At Los Angeles, Ray Allen scored 12 of his 24 points in the third quarter and made 10 of his first 11 shots, leading the Boston Celtics to a victory over the Los Angeles Lakers.

It was the defending NBA champions' first loss in five games since Kobe Bryant went down with a sprained left ankle.

Kendrick Perkins had 13 points and 14 rebounds, Kevin Garnett had 13 points and eight boards and Rajon Rondo added 14 points and 11 assists for the Celtics, who were busy before gametime. They acquired guard Nate Robinson and Marcus Landry from the New York Knicks in exchange for Eddie House, J.R. Giddens, Bill Walker and a future conditional second-round pick.

Pau Gasol scored 22 points, and Lamar Odom had 13 points and 14 rebounds for Los Angeles.

Denver Nuggets forward Carmelo Anthony, right, tries to get past Cleveland Cavaliers forward LeBron James in the first quarter in an NBA basketball game Thursday, Feb. 18, 2010, in Cleveland. AP

Bryant, the league's fourth-leading scorer, remained in the trainer's room getting treatment on his sprained left ankle while his teammates rallied against a defense that came in allowing a league-low 93.7 points per game.

The Lakers had won the previous three meetings with the Celtics after losing the 2008 finals to them in six games. On Jan. 13, they beat Boston 90-89 on the parquet floor, after Bryant hit a jumper with 7.3 seconds left to give the Lakers their only lead of the second half and Allen missed 3-point shot at the final horn.

The Lakers went 4 minutes, 48 seconds without a basket until Odom's layup with 2:26 to play. Garnett missed a 21-footer with 51 seconds left, but the Lakers lost possession on a turnover by Gasol. The Lakers got the ball back and Odom missed a driving layup with 2.2 seconds to go.

The groans from the sellout crowd turned to audible sighs of relief when everyone realized the Lakers had called a time out just before Odom made his move to the basket. But the ensuing inbounds pass from Ron Artest to Derek Fisher resulted in a missed 21-footer by Fisher at the buzzer with Allen's hand in his face.

The Celtics were leading 66-55 when Garnett picked up his fourth foul and went to the bench with 8:27 left in the third quarter. He was replaced by Rasheed Wallace, who received a technical foul from referee Bob Delaney with 3:10 left in the period for shoving Gasol as the two power forwards jockeyed for position.

Garnett didn't return to the floor until 7:53 remained in the game. By then, the Lakers were eight points into a 13-0 run triggered by two layups by Sasha Vujacic and capped by Andrew Bynum's 20-footer. The basket gave Los Angeles an 84-80 lead with 7:14 to play, but Perkins' layup put Boston back in front to stay with 4:24 remaining.

The Celtics shot 55 percent in the first half to build a 53-48 margin. The Lakers took their first lead of the game, 34-32, when Odom sank a pair of free throws with 9:39 left in the second quarter.

Boston responded with a 15-2 run capped by Allen's fastbreak dunk with 5:09 left in the second quarter, after Rondo stole the ball from Gasol. Rondo received a technical foul for taunting the Lakers after Allen's basket, and Fisher converted the free throw.

Shannon Brown beat the first-quarter buzzer with a 3-pointer that trimmed Boston's lead to 29-27. It was his fourth straight start in place of Bryant, after setting career highs with 27 points and 10 rebounds in Tuesday's 104-94 win over Golden State.

McGrady trade the big deal on deadline day

The Cleveland Cavaliers hope they took another step toward keeping LeBron James. The New York Knicks are in better position for a run at him—and a second superstar, too.

And they aren't the only team lining up for a chance to become a summer spender.

The Knicks acquired former scoring champion Tracy McGrady on Thursday in a three-team swap with the Houston Rockets and the Sacramento Kings. The deal left them on the verge of being able to offer two maximum salary contracts to the 2010 free agent class that could be headlined by James.

Amare Stoudemire could be in the market for one if he decides to leave Phoenix—where he'll again finish the season after spending the weeks before the deadline atop the trade rumor mill.

"I've maintained that unless there was something out there that improved our team and put us in a lot better position moving forward, then we weren't going to do anything. And that was the case," Suns general manager Steve Kerr said.

Chicago, Washington and Sacramento all cleared enough salary in moves before the 3 p.m. EST deadline to be able to afford a max player, and the Los Angeles Clippers got close.

The Cavaliers gave James more reason to stay home. They acquired forward Antawn Jamison on Wednesday, a deal that could make the Eastern Conference leaders even stronger.

"We're trying to build a franchise that all players want to be a part of, that can have sustainable success and do things at a high level," general manager Danny Ferry said. "Clearly LeBron's an important player for Northeast Ohio, for Cleveland, for the Cavaliers. It's all ground in winning, too. Antawn can help us win. We're excited what he can bring to us over the next few years."

The Knicks can afford James and perhaps someone else in the class that could include Dwyane Wade and Chris Bosh.

By including Jared Jeffries in the deal for McGrady, whose $22.5 million contract expires after this season, the Knicks removed $6.9 million from next season's payroll and left them with about $32 million in salary cap space. Those top free agents would each earn a little more than $16.5 million in the first season of a max deal.

"Let's put it this way. I think this gives us flexibility. A lot of flexibility in a lot of different directions," Knicks president Donnie Walsh said. "I know everybody is focused on individual players, but we're not. We're focused on putting together the best team we can. So that takes a lot of different directions and we have a lot of time to figure out which way we're going to go, but it is a lot of cap space."

In the meantime, the Knicks hope McGrady can lead them into the playoff race. He's only played six games this season after returning from knee surgery, but is convinced he has plenty left.

"I can't wait to get back on the court to continue doing what I love to do," McGrady said in a statement on his Web site. "I am excited to be headed to New York and look forward to wearing a Knick uniform. I know that I can and will contribute to this organization. It's a dream to play in New York and there is nothing that compares to playing in the Garden."

To get him, the Knicks sent Jeffries and rookie Jordan Hill to Houston along with a protected first-round pick in 2012, and gave the Rockets the right to exchange first-round picks in 2011. The Rockets will get high-scoring guard Kevin Martin and forward Hilton Armstrong from Sacramento, while the Kings received Larry Hughes from the Knicks, Carl Landry and Joey Dorsey from Houston and sent guard Sergio Rodriguez to New York.

The Knicks also dealt Nate Robinson to Boston along with Marcus Landry for Eddie House, J.R. Giddens, Bill Walker and a future conditional second-round pick.

Lysacek upsets Plushenko for gold medal

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP)—Evan Lysacek brought down the champion.

Lysacek became the first U.S. man to win the Olympic gold medal since Brian Boitano in 1988, shocking everyone—maybe even himself—by upsetting defending champion Evgeni Plushenko on Thursday night. Plushenko came out of retirement with the sole purpose of making a little history of his own with a second straight gold medal.

The last to skate. Plushenko held up both index fingers when he finished, as if to say, "Was there ever any question?" As it turned out, yes.

And it wasn't really that close.

When Plushenko's scores were posted, someone in the arena screamed, "Evan Lysacek has won the gold!" Backstage, surrounded by longtime coach Frank Carroll and pairs gold medalists Shen Xue and Zhao Hongbo, Lysacek threw back his head in disbelief and utter elation.

"I could have stood up there for hours and thought about every moment of training that I was thinking, 'God, what if one day?'" Lysacek said. "And it kept me going and it pushed me."

The reigning world champion finished with a career-best 257.67, 1.31 ahead of the Russian. Daisuke Takahashi won the bronze, the first Japanese man to win a figure skating medal at the Olympic Games.

Johnny Weir was sixth and U.S. champ Jeremy Abbott rallied to finish ninth.

Lysacek, whose world title was the first by a U.S. man since 1996, looked almost dazed when he heard the first notes of the "Star-Spangled Banner." But as he watched the flag rise, he broke into a wide grin.

"I saw that American flag go up and I couldn't believe it was for me," Lysacek said.

Someone handed him a U.S. flag as he left the medals podium to take on his victory lap, and he waved it a few times before twirling it above his head like a lasso. As he skated around the arena, he held a bouquet aloft in his right hand and clutched his gold medal in the left. No way anyone was going to take this away from him.

USA's Evan Lysacek skates during the victory ceremony after winning the gold medal in the men's free program figure skating competition at the Vancouver 2010 Olympics in Vancouver, British Columbia, Thursday, Feb. 18, 2010.

AP

Especially not Plushenko.

Much had been made about of Plushenko's transition scores, the mark given for the steps connecting the elements, as well as his other component scores—think of the old artistic marks. But those didn't cost him the medal.

Lysacek edged Plushenko on the mark for their technical elements—jumps, spins and footwork. That's the score where the three-time Olympic medalist and three-time world champion has pretty much made his trademark. And Lysacek won despite not doing a quadruple jump.

"If the Olympic champion doesn't know how to jump a quad, I don't know," Plushenko said. "Now it's not men's figure skating, now it's dancing."

But Lysacek makes no apologies for what he does—and doesn't—do. He's done the quad before, but it puts a lot of stress on the left foot that he broke last year. He originally planned to do the quad here, but after feeling pain in the foot again after last month's U.S. championships, he decided it wasn't worth the risk of getting hurt and having to miss the games.

"If it was a jumping competition, they'd give you 10 seconds to go do your best jump. But it's about 4 minutes and 40 seconds of skating and performing from start to finish," Lysacek said. "That was my challenge tonight, and I feel like I did quite well."

The first of the big guns to skate in the last group, Lysacek seemed more workmanlike than usual for the first three minutes of the program. Everything he did was technically perfect. His jumps were done with the control and dependability of a fine Swiss timepiece, and his spins were so well-centered you could see the tight little circle of his tracings clear across the ice.

He didn't have all his usual flair and charisma, looking more focused on the tasks at hand. But when he landed his last jump, a double axel, Lysacek let loose. His face was so expressive that budding actors should have taken note, and he fixed the judges with a majestic glare during his circular steps. By the time he finished his final spin, fans were roaring their approval.

The last note of his music was still fading when Lysacek pumped his fists and screamed, "Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes!" He clapped his hands and skated to center ice, throwing his arms out wide to the crowd and blowing kisses. As he waited for his marks, he put an arm around Carroll, who had yet to coach a gold medalist despite a list of past and present skaters that reads like a Who's Who on Ice.

"This is just frosting on the cake for me," said Carroll, who coached Linda Fratianne and Michelle Kwan to silver medals and Timothy Goebel to a bronze. "It's not something I coveted after a while. It was something I thought maybe would never happen."

And it might not have, had Plushenko been a little better.

He skated with his usual flair and dramatics, drawing laughs from the crowd with his saucy, seductive tango. No one loves the limelight quite like the Russian, and he was in his element. He preened, posed and skated as if certain another gold medal was his.

But Plushenko, who can do jumps in his sleep, was noticeably off. He was crooked in the air on many of his jumps, and had to be part cat to manage to come down on one foot and hold it long enough for it to count. But the funky finishes cost him the bonus points that are the difference between silver and gold. His spins weren't quite as good as Lysacek's, either, and he got fewer points for one of his footwork sections.

"I am happy with my performance today," said Plushenko, who took off his silver medal as soon as he left the ice. "After 3 1/2 years (off) you can win the silver, it's not bad. When you have two silver and one gold, I think it's not bad."

We likely haven't seen the last of him.

"I knew I would accept any outcome," he said through a translator. "After this defeat, I'm not going to put my hands down and stop."

Takahashi is wonderfully expressive, from the bottom of his blades to the tips of his spiky, mop-topped hair. His edge quality is as fine as a master carver's and his blades are like little lightning strikes, allowing him to change directions and turn without losing a millisecond of speed.

It makes for a fast, energetic and very entertaining program, and he infused it with a healthy dose of sass. He played to the judges and the crowd, taking them along for the ride.

His only flaw was a fall on his opening quadruple toe loop - a jump he hadn't landed all week.

PGA Tour commissioner: Woods to return to therapy

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla. (AP)—Tiger Woods is to return to therapy after he speaks publicly for the first time about his infidelity, according to a letter from PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem that was obtained by The Associated Press.

Finchem's letter to the PGA Tour policy board and other officials explained why Woods chose Friday to make his first public comments, which are to be televised live by the major networks.

Woods' statement comes during the Match Play Championship, sponsored by Accenture, the first company to drop Woods as a pitchman.

"As we understand it, Tiger's therapy called for a week's break at this time during which he has spent a few days with his children and then will make his statement before returning," Finchem said in a letter Thursday. "Accordingly, there was very little flexibility in the date for the announcement."

Woods is to speak at 11 a.m. EST from the clubhouse at TPC Sawgrass, home of the PGA Tour. It will be his first time to speak publicly since his car accident Nov. 27 that sparked sordid revelations of extramarital affairs.

The letter shed no light on whether Woods plans to return to the tour anytime soon.

Ernie Els was among players who were upset to learn that Woods had chosen the week of a World Golf Championship for a public appearance that was sure to take attention away from the tournament. "It's selfish," Els told Golfweek magazine.

Finchem told reporters in Marana, Ariz., earlier this week that he didn't think Woods' appearance would undermine Accenture, and that Woods' handlers "have their own reasons for their schedule."

In the letter, he said the tour discussed the situation with Accenture and "they understand that the PGA Tour was not involved in determining the timing of the statement." Finchem also noted that Woods' comments would be over well before television coverage of the third round from Dove Mountain.

The PGA Tour made available its sprawling, Mediterranean-styled clubhouse for the announcement, and is helping set up adjacent ballrooms at the nearby Sawgrass Marriott for media, where they can watch Woods on closed-circuit TV.

Finchem said in the letter that Woods' management asked for the facilities, and "we agreed as we would for any member of the PGA Tour."

No other PGA Tour player could command this kind of attention, though.

Woods is one of the most recognized athletes in the world. Television ratings double when he is in contention, which has happened a lot on his way to winning 71 times on the PGA Tour and 14 majors, four short of the record held by Jack Nicklaus.

No other athlete had such a spectacular fall, either. Accenture and AT&T have ended their endorsement contracts with him, and Woods has become the butt of jokes everywhere from late shows to Disney performances.

In the hours leading up to his appearance, it already was shaping up as a major event.

Seven satellite trucks already had set up shop in the Marriott parking lot. The last time it had this kind of activity was five years ago for media day at the Super Bowl between the New England Patriots and Philadelphia Eagles.

Tight security restricted access on the road that leads past PGA Tour headquarters to the TPC Sawgrass clubhouse, where Woods has a locker in a special room reserved for past winners of The Players Championship.

Woods is to speak in the Sunset Room on the second floor to a small group of "friends, colleagues and close associates," along with limited media.

"This is not a press conference," Mark Steinberg, Woods' agent, said on Wednesday.

Top seeds, defending champion lose in Match Play

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	34	18	.654	–
Toronto	29	24	.547	5 1/2
Philadelphia	20	33	.377	14 1/2
New York	19	34	.358	15 1/2
New Jersey	5	49	.093	30

Southeast Division

Orlando	37	18	.673	–
Atlanta	34	18	.654	1 1/2
Miami	28	27	.509	9
Charlotte	26	26	.500	9 1/2
Washington	18	33	.353	17

Central Division

Cleveland	43	12	.782	–
Chicago	27	26	.509	15
Milwaukee	24	28	.462	17 1/2
Detroit	19	34	.358	23
Indiana	18	35	.340	24

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	33	21	.611	–
San Antonio	31	21	.596	1
Houston	28	25	.528	4 1/2
New Orleans	28	26	.519	5
Memphis	27	26	.509	5 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	36	18	.667	–
Utah	34	19	.642	1 1/2
Oklahoma City	31	21	.596	4
Portland	32	24	.571	5
Minnesota	13	42	.236	23 1/2

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	42	14	.750	–
Phoenix	32	23	.582	9 1/2
L.A. Clippers	21	33	.389	20
Sacramento	18	36	.333	23
Golden State	15	38	.283	25 1/2

Yesterday's Games

Denver 118, Cleveland 116, OT
Boston 87, L.A. Lakers 86

NBA LEADERS

SCORING

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
James, CLE	54	545	422	1612	29.9
Durant, OKC	52	509	447	1542	29.7
Anthony, DEN	40	398	332	1168	29.2
Bryant, LAL	51	527	302	1426	28.0
Ellis, GOL	48	494	225	1259	26.2
Wade, MIA	55	508	365	1436	26.1
Nowitzki, DAL	53	465	350	1309	24.7
Bosh, TOR	53	463	368	1300	24.5
Johnson, ATL	52	440	148	1118	21.5
Stoudemire, PHX	55	442	291	1175	21.4
Jackson, CHA	52	394	214	1081	20.8
Randolph, MEM	53	438	205	1087	20.5
Maggette, GOL	49	318	353	999	20.4
Evans, SAC	49	359	246	989	20.2
Lee, NYK	53	449	167	1065	20.1
Gay, MEM	51	390	201	1021	20.0
Rose, CHI	53	445	161	1056	19.9
Kaman, LAC	48	391	162	944	19.7
Brooks, HOU	53	357	173	1020	19.2
Boozer, UTA	50	384	190	958	19.2

FG PERCENTAGE

	FG	FGA	PCT
Perkins, BOS	223	367	.608
Howard, ORL	326	540	.604
Hilario, DEN	283	478	.592
Millsap, UTA	252	433	.582
Gasol, MEM	288	496	.581
Bynum, LAL	313	548	.571
Horford, ATL	295	518	.569
O'Neal, CLE	228	408	.559
Lee, NYK	449	810	.554
Stoudemire, PHX	442	804	.550

REBOUNDS

	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Howard, ORL	55	197	540	737	13.4
Camby, LAC	51	166	450	616	12.1
Noah, CHI	46	176	376	552	12.0
Randolph, MEM	53	229	387	616	11.6
Lee, NYK	53	139	468	607	11.5
Bosh, TOR	53	159	446	605	11.4
Duncan, SAN	49	165	375	540	11.0
Wallace, CHA	50	104	440	544	10.9
Boozer, UTA	50	102	440	542	10.8
Haywood, DAL	51	208	314	522	10.2

ASSISTS

	G	AST	AVG
Nash, PHX	55	615	11.2
Paul, NOR	38	424	11.2
Williams, UTA	48	474	9.9
Rondo, BOS	50	481	9.6
Kidd, DAL	53	487	9.2
James, CLE	54	449	8.3
Davis, LAC	53	414	7.8
Westbrook, OKC	52	390	7.5
Wade, MIA	55	352	6.4
Duhon, NYK	53	330	6.2

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MARANA, Arizona (AP)—The often-unpredictable Match Play Championship more than lived up to its reputation in a topsy-turvy second round when the remaining top four seeds and defending champion were beaten at Dove Mountain on Thursday.

An event already minus Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelslon sent several of the world's best to an early exit.

Lee Westwood, Jim Furyk, Martin Kaymer and Rory McIlroy — seeded second through fifth entering the tournament — were among the day's losers. Defending champion Geoff Ogilvy was beaten by Colombian Camilo Villegas 2 and 1. Top-seeded Steve Stricker lost in Wednesday's first round.

The highest remaining seed was England's Paul Casey at No. 6. Casey, the runner-up a year ago who won the World Match Play Championship in England in 2006, swiftly dispatched Canadian Mike Weir, 5 and 4.

The field was narrowed to 16 for Thursday's third round on the sun-drenched desert course near Tucson. Woods, obviously, skipped the event because of his personal woes, and Mickelson begged off to go on vacation with his family.

If that didn't take enough luster off the event, news that Woods would make his first public statement on his sex scandal on Friday certainly did.

But despite the lower profile, the Match Play is proving to be a wide-open competition.

"Like you saw, Steve Stricker won two weeks ago and lost yesterday. So it's a crazy format," said American Nick Watney, who beat Westwood 2 and 1.

The final 16 features five players from the United States, three each from England and South Africa and one apiece from Colombia, Spain, Japan, India and Thailand.

"We had nine Englishmen in the field, which was impressive," Casey said. "I mean, obviously it was because of Tiger and Phil not being here. But I think that puts a little extra sort of emphasis. You kind of want to be the last Englishman here."

Westwood, an Englishman, came back from two down to pull even after 13 holes. Watney, in his first Match Play appearance, regrouped to win the par-4 14th and 15th with birdies to win 2 and 1.

Furyk and Kaymer both lost to South Africans.

A 13-time winner on the U.S. PGA Tour, Furyk was beaten by Charl Schwartzel 3 and 2. Germany's Kaymer also went down 3 and 2, to Tim Clark.

The closest two matches of the day went 20 holes, England's Oliver Wilson beating McIlroy, and South African Retief Goosen defeating Ernie Els.

Among the survivors was Spain's Sergio Garcia, a 2-and-1 winner over Swede Peter Hanson.

"It's a funny tournament, this match play," Garcia said, "because some years you come here you feel like you're playing unbelievable, and you get beaten in the first or second round. And some years you come here, and you don't feel quite as great and you manage to somehow get around it."

After becoming the second No. 64 seed in the event's 12-year history to beat a No. 1 seed with his win over Stricker, England's Ross McGowan lost to Ryo Ishikawa of Japan 1-up. McGowan said his "intensity wasn't quite there as much."

"It's a fantastic event," McGowan said, "and just looking down the leaderboard and looking at the guys that are going out first and second round, and lots have won majors."

Ogilvy was 1-up through 14 holes, but Villegas had birdies on the next two, then clinched it by matching the defending champ's par on No. 17.

"Geoff is a great player and obviously he has a great record in this tournament," Villegas said. "And he beat me last year. Funny enough, as players, we don't forget those things."

But they are friendly rivals. Ogilvy and Villegas had breakfast together before their match. Someone asked if they talked about Woods.

"Who?" Villegas said to laughter in the interview room. "You know what, there's enough talk about him. We don't need to be talking about him. Let the other people do it."

CWGA, Fil-Taga tourneys this weekend

The CNMI Women's Golf Association and the Fil-Taga Golfers Association will hold its February tournaments this weekend at separate golf courses on Saipan.

CWGA will hold its February golf tournament today at Coral Ocean Point Golf Course. Showtime is set at 11:30am with tee time is 12:30pm.

Fil-Taga, meanwhile, will hold its February tournament tomorrow, Feb. 21, at the Marianas Golf and Country Club. Showtime is 11am with tee time an hour later at 11:30am.

The winner will follow Dandi Brebanario, who shot a net 63 (gross 95, 50-45) last month to win the January competition. There will only be one winner in the February tourney and Fil-Taga will reward him with a $150 cash prize. ***(PR)***

SISTER

From Page 28

first. Sand in My Chocolates' Bruce Berline and Russ Quinn dueled Puppy Love's J.R. Gechig and Typhoon Saito for the second and last finals' seat with the first pair prevailing in the do-or-die game, 21-18.

In the finals, Mister and Nelson's familiarity with each other's game lifted In Your Heart to a 21-10 victory over Sand In My Chocolate. Mister and Nelson were teammates in the two-person CNMI beach volleyball team that competed in the 2005 Mini Pacific Games in Palau.

A total of 14 pairs joined the weekend tournament, six teams in the women's and eight in the men's division. The event served as tune-up for the Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival, which will run from Feb. 26 to 28 on the sand court of the Pacific Islands Club.

Next weekend's Marianas Cup will feature pro spikers from Japan, Korea, and the U.S. teaming up with local bets and playing exhibition games.

Meanwhile, tournament organizer Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association would like to thank Fiesta Resort & Spa and Pacific Trading Co. for supporting the one-day event.

KIM

From Page 28

"He started playing tennis in September last year to lose weight. At first, he did not like going to the court and playing, as he is more or a swimmer. However, as he continued to meet a lot of kids and learn how to play tennis, he began to like the sport. He even practice every day during school break," said Jih Yun Kim, Min Sik's mother.

After only two months, the younger Kim competed in his first tournament, the Tan Holdings Classic, and finished third in the boys' 10-and-under division.

"That was one of his best memories on Saipan, winning a medal despite being new to the sport," the older Kim said.

In the recent Coconut Classic tournament, Min Sik was among the more 60 junior players who joined the two-weekend event and he claimed a bronze medal, anew in the 10-and-under age group.

"Minsik always do his best in every game regardless of the results, but every time he wins, it gives him confidence," Jih Yun added.

Loyola also had good words for his student, saying Min Sik skills are above average.

"I also like his attitude. He is very eager and serious to learn more. He has good sportsmanship, too," Loyola said.

Jih Yun said Min Sik will return to Korea on Feb. 26 to continue his studies and the younger Kim vowed to continue playing tennis there.

"Min Sik will leave Saipan with a lot of valuable lessons and memories on his mind. He will continue to improve his tennis skills in Korea. He will miss Saipan and his tennis friends here, and he is thankful to the people who welcomed him on the tennis court and played with and against him," said Jih Yun, adding her son will also play in a tournament in Australia.

DALY

From Page 28

completing the race in 56:30. Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel and Fred Camacho made it to the Top 3 after timing in at 1:03:29 and 1:05:42, respectively.

The short course had triathletes completing a 500-meter swim at Pau Pau Beach, a bike race from Pau Pau to Bird Island and back with no detour to Grotto or Banzai, and a run from Pau Pau to Marianas Resort entrance and back.

Other participants in the short course were Florence Antonio (1:08:05), Peter Bonser (1:09:04), Derek Chambers (1:15:00), Stan Good (1:15:42), Jay Diyco (1:21:00), and Kathryn Barry (2:09:22).

Last weekend's race included a special event called "Did Their Own Thing" or D-TOT with Paul Viator besting four other participants after clocking in at 1:30:30. Andres Buitrago finished second with a time of 1:50:17, while Joshua Stevens came in third at 1:58:26.

Enticer I was included in Sports Adventure Club of Saipan's calendar of events for 2010 and it aimed to prepare local triathletes for two big races next month, the 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championship and Tagaman Triathlon. XTERRA will be held on March 13, while Tagaman will hit the road on March 20.

ADVANCE

From Page 28

The victory ended Calikano's four-game losing skid and improved its record to 4-7, while the loss extended Go For Broke's misfortunes, as the latter dropped to a 3-7 slate.

Calikano seemed headed for another defeat when it trailed, 3-11, after two and a half innings. At the bottom of the third, Kapileo, who homered in the first inning, hit a two-run homer this time and B.J. Omar followed it up with solo round-tripper to spark Calikano's rally and cut the lead to one, 10-11.

Calikano added three more runs at the top of the fourth to finally grabbed the lead and it kept the driver's seat, as the team's defense hung in there, limiting Go For Broke to only one run in the last four innings.

Advance 18, 6-Pack 14

Another team moved out of slump with Advance X-Terminators downing 6-Pack, 18-14.

The win snapped Advance's three-game losing skid and gave the team a 3-7 slate. 6-Pack had an even 5-5 mark.

Advance played solid offense in the second and third inning to turn a 1-6 deficit to a 15-6 lead. 6-Pack never recovered from thereon. Angel Reyes and J.J. Cabrera led Advance's win, drilling four and three RBIs, respectively.

In the third game of the night, San Roque won by forfeit against Fuegu.

On Monday's games, Natibu improved to a 10-0 record, thumping Hits, 22-12.

Pitcher Ned Norita tallied six RBIs, while catcher Bruce Norita added four RBIs.

Natibu started strong, behind Norita three-run homer in the first inning to take a 9-1 lead after two complete innings en route to a 10-run win in six innings.

The Blazers also needed only six innings to beat Lancheros, 20-7.

Jess Taitano went 4-for-5 and logged four RBIs to lead the Blazers to an easy win.

In the third game on Monday night, shortstop Jun Salalila homered in his last three trips at bat to give G-Ballers a 15-8 victory over the Ramblers.

Lysacek upsets Plushenko for gold medal

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Anthony has 40 as Nuggets end Cavs' 13-game streak

Page 25

Sister act at Fiesta On The Beach

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Siblings Mel and Emily Matson teamed up for Just Crush It and won the women's division of the Fiesta On The Beach "For the Love of Volleyball" Tournament played on the sand court of Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan last weekend.

The Matson sisters came out of the loser's bracket to stun first finalists Heart Healers in the finals. Heart Healers were composed of Laurie Peterka and Kim Peterson and earned a twice-to-beat advantage in the championship round after going undefeated in the double-elimination preliminary games.

However, the Matson sisters overcame Peterka and Peterson's advantage, nailing a 21-11 win in Game 1 and a title-clincher victory in Game 2, 21-10. Emily and Mel had to beat Sweet Tart's Angie Mister and Carmel Hasselback first in the second semis game, 21-18, to advance to the finals against Heart Healers.

In the men's division, In Your Heart's Tyce Mister and Chris Nelson took the No. 1 seeding and made it to the finals

See SISTER on Page 27

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Participants in the Fiesta On The Beach "For the Love of Volleyball" Tournament pose for a group photo on the sand court of Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan last weekend.

Kim to continue honing tennis skills in Korea

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Minsik Kim serves during last year's Tan Holdings Classic tennis tournament at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan tennis courts.

Name: **Minsik Kim**
Sport: **Tennis/Swimming**
School: **Saipan International School**
Favorite Player: **Andre Agassi**

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

SPORTS FLIGHT

Min Sik Kim is leaving Saipan next week and will be bringing with him a new found passion—tennis—when he returns to Korea.

Kim is among the growing list of junior tennis players who are hooked to the sport, spending weekends and after school hours on the walls of American Memorial Park and Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan tennis courts hitting balls.

Playing tennis was not included in Kim's favorite sports first, swimming was. However when his parents observed their son was gaining weight faster, they decided to enroll him to a tennis class under Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan instructor Peter Loyola.

See KIM on Page 27

Daly leads winners in Enticer

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Kieran Daly led winners in a pre-XTERRA and Tagaman race, ruling the long course of Enticer I held last week at the northern portion of the island.

Daly completed the swim-bike-run event in the long course in one hour, 33 minutes, and 38 seconds to beat 15 other participants. The Pacific Islands Club general manager reached the finish line at Pau Pau Beach four minutes ahead of Tyce Mister, who timed in at 1:37:40. Lewie Tenorio came in third with his 1:37:57.

The long course had a distance of 1,000m for the swim part. The bike leg had riders starting from Pau Pau Beach then heading to Suicide Cliff, Bird Island, Grotto, Banzai, and back. The run part also started at Pau Pau to FEBC entrance and then back.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Kieran Daly makes a thumbs up sign at the beginning of the run leg of the long course division in Enticer I held last week.

Other finishers in the long course were Russ Quinn (1:45:13), Ando Shogo (1:46:50), Joshua Berger (1:52:16), Manny Sitchon (1:53:00), Ronald Villafria (1:54:22), Dawn Hammermeister (1:55:22), Ben Babauta (1:58:28), and Jim Arenovski (2:15:10).

In the short course, Butch Sublemente bested 10 other participants after

See DALY on Page 27

Nunu Kapileo, who plays for Calikano, recorded four RBIs in the team's 14-12 win over Go For Broke in the Chamolinian softball league on Wednesday at the Capital Hill Ballfield.
ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Advance, Calikano move out of slump

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Nunu Kapileo went only 2-for-4 at bat, but made four RBIs, to power Calikano to a 14-12 win over Go For Broke during their game in Chamolinian Softball Association's 2009 Budweiser Slow-pitch Softball League on Wednesday at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

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